

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE:
125 YEARS OF AMAZING PHOTOGRAPHY



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Saturday 16 February 2013

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THE WORLD'S NO.1 WEEKLY PHOTO MAGAZINE

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Canon EOS 6D vs Nikon D600 WHICH AFFORDABLE FULL-FRAME SLR?

ON TEST

- Image quality
- Focusing
- Noise
- Handling



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ON TEST

1,000 FLASHERS WITHOUT STOPPING!

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TECHNIQUE

SHOOTING SNOWDROPS

Heather Angel dispenses expert advice and practical tips



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ICONIC OLYMPUS PEN

Ivor Matanle's history of the revolutionary half-frame

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Amateur Photographer For everyone who loves photography

WHILE National Geographic magazine has been probably the best place to find picture stories from around the world, it used to be that it wasn't the only publication that carried them. I remember *The Sunday Times* colour supplement would feature a documentary about some far-flung tribe, the life of the Tokyo commuter or working conditions in Brazil's Serra Pelada gold mine. Articles such as these inspired not only generations of naturalists and environmentalists, but also hordes of photographers to seek adventure. To be inspired to seek adventure you don't have to find it on a grand scale; you can sit at your desk all day dreaming of the rainforest, record a local river as though it were the Zambezi or

your neighbours as though they are primitive pierced creatures. Photographers get double benefit from this kind of article. We get the same enjoyment everyone gets from learning about new things, but we also get the enjoyment of seeing how well those things have been photographed.

National Geographic probably isn't the last bastion of the high-quality photo story, but in this country it feels like it. May it continue for years to come. See our feature on *National Geographic's* 125th anniversary on pages 22-27.



Damien Demolder
Editor

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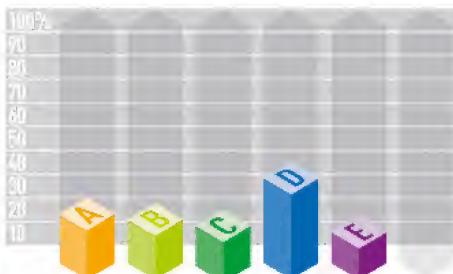
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THE AP READERS' POLL

IN AP 26 JANUARY WE ASKED...

What was your local branch of Jessops like?



YOU ANSWERED...

A It was excellent all round	20%
B The staff were great, but there was no stock	18%
C There was stock, but no expert staff	15%
D It really wasn't good at all	35%
E I've never shopped at Jessops	12%

THIS WEEK WE ASK...

Do you ever read *National Geographic*?

VOTE ONLINE www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

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Last year, Canon released the EOS 6D and Nikon the D600 entry-level full-frame DSLRs, but what do these models offer enthusiast photographers wanting to upgrade and is this a good time to switch brand loyalties? Richard Sibley finds out

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If you're looking for a high-performing flashgun that will work all day, Nissin's MG8000 Extreme could be the one for you – especially when combined with the external Power Pack PS300. Ian Farrell tries them out

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Our experts answer your questions

55 ICONS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Ivor Matanle traces the history of the Olympus Pen, the half-frame camera that led a revolution in the 1960s



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OPENING HOURS
MON-SAT 10AM - 5:30PM

• Jessops name survives • Business guru snaps up brand

DRAGONS' DEN STAR BUYS 'JESSOPS'

DRAGONS' Den entrepreneur Peter Jones has bought the Jessops brand name. A source close to the discussions has not ruled out the re-opening of some stores.

In a statement, Rob Hunt, joint administrator at PwC, told AP: 'We can confirm that we have sold the brand and certain other assets to a number of buyers, including entrepreneur Peter Jones CBE.'

It is understood that 'certain other assets' refers to stock and intellectual property.

AP understands, from a well-placed source, that discussions over the future of Jessops are ruling nothing out, including the possibility of re-opening some Jessops stores through a cherry-picking process.

Meanwhile, retail restructuring specialist Hilco – which was among around half a dozen parties in the frame to take over the Jessops brand – has played a role in the deal, the financial details of which have not been released.

A PwC spokesman confirmed to AP: 'Hilco has had a hand in it.'

Last month, Hilco announced it was taking control of music retailer HMV, by buying the chain's debt.

SPECULATION

As we went to press, there was not yet any official word on whether remaining HMV shops will house Jessops outlets.

The PwC spokesman said that, as far as he was aware, Jones had not bought Jessops' online business, in addition to the brand name, although this has been reported in the press elsewhere.

The spokesman dismissed reports of HMV stores housing Jessops-branded outlets as 'speculation'.

Jessops closed its remaining 187



stores on 11 January, with the loss of around 1,400 jobs.

Meanwhile, former Jessops chairman David Adams has questioned whether camera suppliers would be attracted to the idea of a Jessops-branded outlet inside an HMV store.

Adams, who left Jessops last year, lost his role as a non-executive director at HMV when the music and DVD retailer fell into administration earlier this month.

Speaking recently to AP, Adams said he is not convinced that camera suppliers would be willing to support Jessops-branded outlets inside an HMV store, with the likes of big names such as Dixons (the owner of Currys and PC World), Argos and John Lewis already fulfilling a high-street role.

Although Canon declined to comment on the subject, a Nikon UK spokesperson told AP: 'Nikon worked closely with Jessops for many years and would similarly work

with any parties looking to continue the business.'

Last year, Adams – who left as Jessops chairman in February 2012 – tried to persuade Jessops' bank, HSBC, to accept a private equity takeover deal.

Adams believes the chain could have survived with fewer branches and that its disappearance from the high street was 'avoidable'.

'We thought we were going in the right direction, particularly with suppliers... We were trying to be a channel to market for them,' said Adams, stressing that Jessops prided itself on its customer service.

In the week the chain went into administration, Adams was approached regarding similar private equity deals.

An HSBC spokesman said it had 'not received any creditable approach to purchase its debt and/or equity positions in Jessops'.

SNAP SHOTS

● Staff from axed chain Jessops have been offered a year's free membership of the Master Photographers Association to help those wanting to become professional photographers. The offer, worth £99, applies to the year ending March 2014. The MPA says benefits include the chance to pass a Certificate of Competence and a business-orientated Diploma in Professional Photography. For details, visit www.mpaprofessionals.com/join.

● There's a top prize of £5,000 in the British Wildlife Photography Awards, which has just opened for entries. The contest carries a total prize pot worth £20,000 and features two new categories: Botanical Britain and Natural Details. The closing date for entries is 4 May 2013. Visit www.bwpawards.org for details.



Do you have a story?

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amateurphotographer@ipcmedia.com

NIKON UNVEILS 18-35MM LENS

NIKON has unveiled a 'versatile, lightweight', 18-35mm wideangle zoom lens, optimised for use with high-resolution, full-frame DSLRs.

The AF-S Nikkor 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5G ED is built from 12 elements in eight groups, and features three aspherical

lenses, two extra-low dispersion lenses and Nikon's Super Integrated Coating to help cut flare and ghosting.

The 385g newcomer, which also contains a Silent Wave Motor, is due out on 7 March, with a price tag of £669.99.



A week of photographic opportunity

PHOTODIARY

Wednesday 13 February

EXHIBITION Man Ray Portraits, until 27 May at National Portrait Gallery, London WC2H 0HE. Tel: 0207 306 0055. Visit www.npg.org.uk.

EXHIBITION Katako 'From Urban Decay to Scrap-Art' by Hugh Ardoin, last day, at theprintspace, London E2 8DL. Tel: 0207 739 1060. Visit www.theprintspace.co.uk.

Thursday 14 February



© BRIAN ARIS

EXHIBITION Debbie Harry Queen of Punk: Portraits by Brian Aris, until 17 February at Proud Chelsea, London SW3 5XP. Tel: 0207 839 4942. Visit www.proud.co.uk.

EXHIBITION Works by Mark Boulos, Gerard Byrne and Richard Wentworth, until 9 March at Lissongallery, London NW1 5BY. Tel: 0207 724 2739. Visit www.lissongallery.com.

Friday 15 February

EXHIBITION The Archaeology of a Disaster – the Aftermath of Japan's 2011 Earthquake and Tsunami, by Dean Chapman, until 16 March at Side Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 3JE. Tel: 0191 232 2208. Visit www.amber-online.com. **EXHIBITION** While There's Tea There's Hope by David Garner, until 24 February at A la Ronde, Exmouth, Devon EX8 5BD. Tel: 01395 265 514. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.



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Saturday 16 February

EXHIBITION Borderliners, by Lithuanian photographers Aleksandras Macijauskas and Rimantas Viksraitis, until 23 March at Ffotogallery, Penarth CF64 3DH. Tel: 0292 070 8870. Visit www.ffotogallery.org. **DON'T MISS** Daffodil Walk (10.30am-5pm) in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care at Glendurgan Garden, Mawnan Smith, Cornwall TR11 5JZ. Tel: 01326 252 020. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

Sunday 17 February

DON'T MISS Wild Snowdrop walks (10am-11am; noon-1pm; 2pm-3pm) at Mottisfont, near Romsey, Hampshire SO51 0LP. Tel: 01794 340 757. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2012 (owned by the Natural History Museum and BBC Worldwide), until 3 March at Natural History Museum, London SW7 5BD. Tel: 0207 942 5000. Visit www.nhm.ac.uk.

Monday 18 February

EXHIBITION Tyler Udall, until 16 March at The Little Black Gallery, London SW10 0AJ. Tel: 0207 349 9332. Visit www.thelittleblackgallery.com. **EXHIBITION** Termini by Heidi Specker, until 16 March at Brancolini Grimaldi, London W1S 4JJ. Tel: 020 7493 5721. Visit www.brancolinigrimaldi.com.

Tuesday 19 February

EXHIBITION Ill Form and Void Full by Laura Letinsky, until 7 April at The Photographers' Gallery, London W1F 7LW. Tel: 0207 087 9300. Visit www.photonet.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** A Shifting Sense of Things by Darren Harvey-Regan, until 8 March, at Sumarria Lunn Gallery, London W1K 5AB. Tel: 0207 493 9598. Visit www.sumarialunn.com.

QUARTET OF LENSES REVEALED BY SIGMA

SIGMA has launched four new lenses at the CP+ Camera & Photo Imaging show in Yokohama, Japan.

Three of the lenses – the 30mm f/2.8 DN, 19mm f/2.8 DN and 60mm f/2.8 DN – are designed for use on micro four thirds or Sony E-mount cameras.

Sigma explains that the 60mm lens will deliver the 35mm equivalent of a 120mm lens on a micro four thirds camera, and 90mm on an E-mount body.

The fourth lens, a 30mm f/1.4 DC HSM, is aimed at users of APS-C-format DSLRs.

UK availability and prices have yet to be announced.

Sigma is expected to reveal two more lenses at the Asia Imaging Fair in Beijing, China, from 1-3 April.



The lenses below are designed for CSCs



FOURTEEN BRITS ON SONY SHORTLIST

FOURTEEN UK photographers are among the best entrants in this year's Sony World Photography Awards.

The 2013 contest attracted more than 122,000 entries, the highest in its history.

The shortlist of British photographers includes six amateurs in the Open category and three in the Youth section.

Commenting on this year's finalists, a spokesman said: 'Topics ranged from haunting shots of the Syrian conflict to the Obama presidential campaign; an intimate study of cinema-



goers in Kabul to quirky and witty shots of the animal kingdom.'

The images will go on show at Somerset House

in London from 26 April to 12 May.

The overall competition winners will be announced on 25 April.

PANASONIC REVAMPS 14-42MM LENS



PANASONIC has revealed a new standard zoom lens in the shape of the Lumix G Vario 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 II ASPH MEGA OIS.

Due out in March and priced around £219, the lens features seven aperture blades and is built from nine elements in eight groups, including two aspherical lenses.

It will be available in black and silver colour options.

SNAP SHOTS

● The London Camera Exchange reported an upsurge in customers after Jessops shut its doors on 11 January. Matt Sanders, manager of the Southampton branch, said: 'Hopefully, customers have been impressed by our shops, staff, prices, product range and level of service.' Although he said it is too early to predict the long-term impact on the high street, he added: 'A proportion of Jessops' in-store business will no doubt migrate to other retailers via online or telephone mail order in the short term. We anticipate continued and increased demand for our kind of in-store based, hands-on approach. London Camera Exchange has 28 stores nationwide.'

● Quantum has launched a new ringlight flash called the Omicron 3, billed as a 'hybrid' ringlight that allows the user to capture stills and video at the same time. TTL or manual flash control is possible using a CoPilot control unit. Its makers claim it is ideal for creating flash 'in the midst of a video segment'. The Omicron 3, which emits a continuous light, costs around £720. Call 01202 733 123 or visit www.flaghead.co.uk.



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KODAK EXPECTS FILM AND PAPER TO STAY PUT

EASTMAN Kodak is confident that its film-manufacturing division will remain at its US headquarters, and paper production will stay in Harrow, UK, under new ownership.

Last year, Kodak announced plans to dispose of its film and photographic paper divisions, as part of the sale of its Personalized Imaging business.

At the time of writing, Kodak expected potential buyers to launch formal bids for the business, as the US company attempts to emerge from bankruptcy protection in the first half of this year.

Dennis Olbrich, Eastman Kodak's general manager for Film Capture, Paper and Output Systems, said it would make sense for any buyer to retain film manufacture on site.

He explained that the company shares its film-making facilities in Rochester, New York, with Kodak's motion-picture business.

'It's ironed into the ground,' he told AP.

But he admitted that all options are up for negotiation.

Asked whether paper production will remain in Harrow, Olbrich replied: 'We won't know for sure until negotiation is done but... I cannot see the possibility of that being moved to a different location because it is similar technology to film manufacture.'

And he all but ruled out any transfer of film production to China under new owners.

Asked whether it would make sense for a buyer to move manufacturing to China, to take advantage of lower labour costs, perhaps, Olbrich replied that film manufacture is 'more material component driven'.

'If you started from scratch today, you would have to consider that very carefully,' he said.

PRICE RISES

Olbrich added that further price rises for Kodak professional films may be required in order to offset any further decline in demand in the consumer film business.

Olbrich, pictured with Kodak president Laura G Quatela at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas last month



'We have to be able to raise prices over time, or else it just becomes unsustainable... You can't do it for the love of it,' he said.

Olbrich said Kodak saw a 'very rapid decline' in consumer and professional films in 2008/2009.

Although demand for consumer film continues to plunge, that for professional colour negative film has remained 'stable', and there was only a 'very modest decline' in black & white last year, according to preliminary sales figures seen by Kodak.

However, Kodak bosses have pressured the manufacturing team to drive down costs to 'try to offset any decline rate', by scaling back and consolidating.

Kodak has told potential buyers that there is a 'sustainable product line for years to come' for film. 'We are taking the opportunity to ensure we are building an organisation that is very efficient and is really geared for the slightly bigger than

£1bn revenue that this business will be, going forward, rather than the \$20bn dollars that Eastman Kodak company was 10 years ago.'

Part of this has involved, over the past few months, shutting down Kodak's photo-finishing operation in Guadalajara, Mexico, and consolidating operations in Rochester, New York.

The closure of the Guadalajara plant, which made disposable cameras, reportedly cost 350 jobs.

Olbrich said Kodak is seeing some professional photographers and advanced amateurs returning to film, especially younger people trying film for the first time who are attracted by its 'tactile nature'.

Kodak exited the slide film business last year.

As part of its restructure, Kodak is selling off infrastructure in Rochester to third parties, who then manage it for tenants.

TAMRON 14-150MM MFT OPTIC ON WAY

TAMRON has announced the development of a 14-150mm micro four thirds lens.

The 'high-power' 14-150mm f/3.5-5.8 Di III VC – the launch date of which has not been released – will include a stepping motor optimised to provide 'silent, quick and accurate autofocus'.

Housed in a metal exterior, the lens,

which has 17 elements in 13 groups, will be available in black and silver colour options.

Features include Tamron's Vibration Compensation (VC) and a seven-blade diaphragm.

The lens will include one low-dispersion element and a hybrid aspherical element to help reduce aberrations.



AP THIS WEEK IN...

1932

George Bernard Shaw had been spotted 'manipulating a vest pocket camera' in photographs of him on the summit of Table Mountain in South Africa, noted AP this week in 1932. 'Before he made his journey, Mr Shaw was making the unusual complaint (for him) of growing old, but perhaps he finds rejuvenation in his hobby. It is now nearly a quarter of a century since he addressed the Camera Club on a memorable occasion on the subject of photography, and he is still faithful to the pursuit he then decorated with such scintillating epigrams.'



CLUB NEWS

Club news from around the country

DUDLEY CAMERA CLUB

The club is due to hold its annual show from 2 March-27 April at the Dudley Museum & Art Gallery, St James's Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1HU. For details visit www.dudleycameraclub.co.uk.

THE FOCUS GROUP

The group plans to stage an exhibition of members' work from 13-20 April at the Assembly Rooms, North Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1LQ. Formed in 2006, by photographers based in the South of England, the group has recently built a new website at www.focusgroupphotography.com.

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Three models unveiled at CP+

PENTAX REVEALS OUTDOOR CAMERAS

PENTAX has unveiled three new compact cameras designed for the outdoors, one of which features GPS functionality.

Pentax used the CP+ Camera & Photo Imaging show, in Yokohama, Japan (31 January-3 February) to show off its new WG-3 GPS (pictured above and right), WG-3 and WG-10.

Boasting a waterproof capability down to 14m, the 16-million-pixel WG-3 GPS and WG-3 can also withstand a two-metre drop and temperatures as low as -10°C, according to Pentax.

Both sport a 4x (25-100mm equivalent) f/2 zoom lens, a 3in (460,000-dot) LCD monitor and full HD video.



The WG-3 GPS is compatible with the wireless Qi charging system available separately.

The WG-3 GPS and WG-3 are due in UK stores in March, priced £329.99 and £279.99 respectively.

Also new is an entry-level model called the WG-10, priced £179.99 and also available in March.

It is built to be waterproof down to 10m and shock resistant to a height of 1.5m.

All three models include a digital microscope mode that is designed to be used with built-in LED macro lights surrounding the lens, showing a magnified image on screen.

The three models are compatible with wireless, Eye-Fi memory cards.

ITALIAN FUGITIVE PAP 'HANDS HIMSELF IN'



Do you have a story?

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FABRIZIO Corona, one of Italy's most famous paparazzi photographers, has handed himself in to police in Portugal, according to an Italian newspaper that cites sources close to the investigation.

Corona was on the run from authorities in Italy after he faced a blackmail conviction over potentially humiliating photos of international footballer David Trezeguet.

Corona was arrested in

Lisbon, Portugal, reports Italian newspaper *Gazzetta del Sud*.

A European arrest warrant was issued for the celebrity photographer who went missing when he visited a gym, despite his movements being monitored by police.

He vanished a few hours before his conviction was announced by an Italian court.

Corona was accused of demanding money from the footballer.



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AP hands-on

Samsung NX300

A new sensor, faster processing and autofocus, as well as improved Wi-Fi make the **Samsung NX300** more than a mere upgrade. **Richard Sibley** reveals his first impressions of the new compact system camera

ALMOST a year since Samsung announced the launch of the NX210, its successor, the NX300, has been unveiled to coincide with the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, USA. Although the design of the camera's body may give the impression that this is simply a slight upgrade of the NX210, the new camera has some significant improvements, particularly regarding image processing.

I spent a morning out shooting with a pre-production version of the NX300, and even in this early version of the camera the improvements were plain to see.

BODY

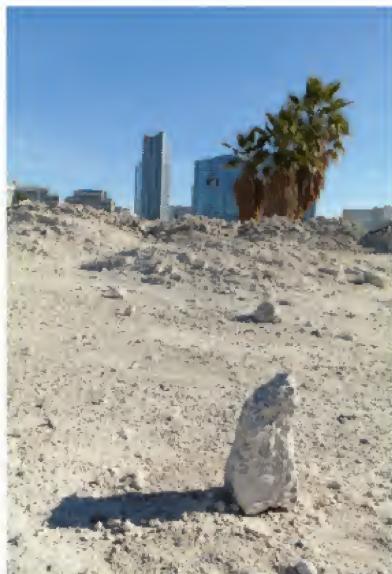
The Samsung NX300 is instantly recognisable as an NX-system camera, with the familiar flat front and slightly curving handgrip. It is a style that features in the NX210 and the NX1000, as well as

on the Samsung Galaxy Camera. On the pre-production sample of the camera that I used, the menu system looked largely the same as that on the older NX cameras, and the button layout was also identical, but with the addition of a new Direct Link Wi-Fi button on the top-plate.

The two major additions to the camera are on the new LCD screen. Although the exact specifications aren't available, the 3in screen is now articulated with a tilting mechanism. Thankfully, this hasn't compromised the size of the camera, and the NX300 is still fairly slim. The new screen is also touch-compatible, allowing functions to be accessed quickly. This will probably be used mostly for selecting the AF area in use. As expected from a mobile-phone manufacturer, the touchscreen seems to work well and is sensitive enough not to require a firm press.

AT A GLANCE

- New 20.3-million-pixel APS-C-sized CMOS sensor
- Hybrid auto AF system
- DRIMe IV image-processing engine
- 8.6fps shooting rate
- RRP £599 with 20-50mm lens



SENSOR

Although the Samsung NX300 shares the same 20.3-million-pixel resolution as the NX210 and the NX1000, it does, in fact, use a new imaging sensor. The 20.3-million-pixel, APS-C-sized CMOS sensor is claimed to produce 'high-quality and detailed images, with sharp, lifelike colours that are crisp and clear in all light conditions'. While it is too early to make a final assessment of the quality of these images from a pre-production version of the camera, early signs show that NX300 should produce better-quality images than its predecessor. However, such incremental improvements to image quality are to be expected from one generation of camera to another, and they are not the sole reason behind the new image sensor.

FASTER AF

Like many of its competitors, the Samsung NX300 features a hybrid auto AF system that combines both phase-detection and contrast-detection AF. The phase-detection AF is on-sensor, meaning that some of the photosites are used to judge

the camera's AF. It is unclear whether these photosites are still used in image capture or whether they are now purely dedicated for phase-detection AF. However, it is this new autofocus function that is the main reason for the camera's revamped sensor. This should prove to be a big advancement for Samsung, as the AF of the company's previous compact system cameras has lagged a little behind the competition.

My experience using the NX300 certainly convinced me that the AF speed was faster. Again, while it is too early to make an accurate assessment, it seems that the faster AF speed will make the NX300 more comparable to its rivals, and we look forward to putting this to the test.

FASTER PROCESSING

Processing all the data produced by the NX300's sensor is the Samsung DRIMe IV imaging engine. This is said to increase the operating speed of the camera, as well helping to improve colour rendition and noise reduction. The shooting rate is also slightly faster at 8.6fps, as opposed to 8fps in the NX210.

With only a short amount of time with the camera, it was difficult to test the speed of the NX300 conclusively. However, I did feel that raw images were being processed and saved faster than on previous Samsung NX cameras. The slow speed of raw-image shooting was an issue for enthusiast photographers using the older NX cameras, and the faster processing, combined with the faster AF, should make this camera more appealing.

FASTER WI-FI

It seemed 2012 was the year of Wi-Fi connectivity in cameras. However, with the exception of just a few cameras, it could be quite a long-winded process to get a camera connected to a smart device such as a tablet or smart phone. The NX300, combined with a new version of the Samsung Smart Camera App, claims to be able to solve this problem. The enhanced Wi-Fi support allows one-touch sharing of images via social-network sites, and the process of connecting the camera to devices has been improved. This function

Left: AP Editor Damien Demolder is photographed using the NX300's black and white mode, while (below left) the standard colour setting renders nice blue skies in this early morning shot taken on the outskirts of Las Vegas

Right: Richard Sibley shooting with the NX300



wasn't available to try out on the pre-production version of the camera.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Although at first glance there is very little to distinguish the NX300 from other cameras in the NX range, it does promise to address some of the problems that enthusiast photographers have raised with the performance of the cameras.

The AF speed and operation seem faster, which is a big advantage, and I hope the improved image quality and faster Wi-Fi connectivity are as good as Samsung has stated.

As for 3D shooting, it seems that most other manufacturers have left this technology in 2011, with virtually no one bringing out 3D-compatible products last year. I find it difficult to get excited about the idea of 3D stills and video, especially as most users won't yet have a device capable of viewing the footage. However, what is very interesting is the LCD shutter in the lens and the technology that is behind this.

Samsung marketed its cameras heavily towards the end of 2012, which should have brought plenty of new photographers to the NX system. To keep these photographers from switching to rival brands, Samsung will have to continuously improve its cameras, and it looks like the NX300 is a step in the right direction.

The Samsung NX300 is due to go on sale in early March, priced £599, and will be bundled with a full version of Adobe Lightroom. **AP**



3D STILLS AND VIDEO

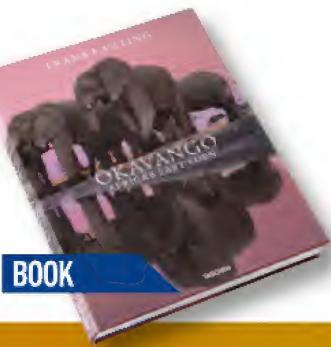
ALONG with the NX300, Samsung also announced a new NX45mm f/1.8 2D/3D lens. This is the first interchangeable lens that can shoot both stills and moving images, although only the NX300 is able to make use of the 3D facility.

The lens uses a split left and right LCD shutter that switches between each side being on or off up to 60 times a second. This allows both left and right images to be captured to produce the 3D effect for both stills and video footage.



APReview

The latest photography books, exhibitions and websites. By Jon Stapley



BOOK



© FRANS LANTING/TASCHEN STOCK

Okavango: Africa's Last Eden

By Frans Lanting.
Taschen, £27.99,
hardback, 252 pages,
ISBN 978-3-8365-3415-4



© FRANS LANTING/TASCHEN STOCK

FIRST published in 1993, Frans Lanting's year-long photographic exploration of Africa's Okavango has been updated in this splendid new edition, filled with stirring images of wildlife at its most raw and uncontrolled. The contrast between the lean months of the dry season and the rich, abundant life that comes with the wet is fascinating to view and must have been even more so to witness. Lanting's film photographs still look great, and his accompanying notes give an immediate sense of the extreme situations he got himself into. With conservation still an issue, and many African ecosystems still under threat, these photographs remind us of the beauty we stand to lose.



© FRANS LANTING/TASCHEN STOCK



Denis Piel: Moments

By Denis Piel. Rizzoli, £47.50, hardback, 272 pages, ISBN 978-0-8478-3878-3

DENIS Piel's style of fashion photography, pioneered in the 1980s, feels far removed from the touched-up gloss of today. His signature was said to be a feeling of reality, his images more based in life than those of his contemporaries. Indeed, on leafing through this collection of his works, one thing that jumps out is the sense of spontaneity. Although Piel's photographs are undoubtedly intricately posed and highly structured, they frequently don't feel that way. There is a loose, playful energy to them, and this provides a delightful contrast to the infamously constricting nature of the world of fashion. The book is replete with faces that would subsequently become globally famous, and Piel's unique photographic style reveals a whole new side to them.



Hin Chua: After the Fall

Until 17 March, Third Floor Gallery, 102 Bute Street, Cardiff CF10 5AD. Tel: 02921 159 151. Website: www.thirdfloorgallery.com. Open Wed-Sun noon-6pm. Admission free.

BY ITS very nature, Malaysian-born photographer Hin Chua's After the Fall series is difficult to define. It deals with change and impermanence, documenting the ways in which landscapes and cities are being reshaped, whether by our own hands or those of nature. Chua is an original and innovative photographer and has an eye for surreal compositions. In one image (above), vividly coloured building materials sit in shipping containers in front of a grey river and skyline – a contrast that forebodes change to follow. In another, a cluttered web of bare tree branches slowly entwines an abandoned car. There is an abundance of quality images to get stuck into here.

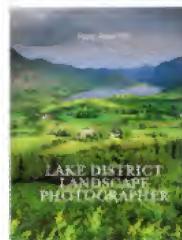
www.fire-cracker.org

FIRECRACKER, the brainchild of Fiona Rogers, is a website dedicated to promoting and supporting female photographers in Europe. Every month since January 2011 has seen a series by a photographer placed in the Firecracker spotlight, and this looks set to continue into 2013. As Rogers is part of Magnum Photos, there is unsurprisingly a heavy documentary focus, with many of the featured photographers having travelled to far-flung places to glimpse the life of different cultures. The archive is inviting and easy to navigate, and many of the featured series are quite poignant. The site's main page could do with updating, with a dead link and some out-of-date announcements, but a little digging will unearth a treasure trove of great photography.



CONDENSED READING

A round-up of the latest photography books on the market

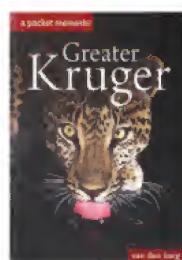


● LAKE DISTRICT LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER by Peter Freeman, £16.99

The excellent landscapes throughout this book lend plenty of credence to Peter Freeman's advice on getting the most out of photographing the Lake District. The writing is sometimes a little blunt or inelegant, but the content is solid and Freeman does a decent job of translating the lessons of his own experience into simple terms. ● **THE JOUBERTS: BIG CAT ODYSSEY (DVD)**, £14.99



Another entry into this National Geographic series from naturalist filmmakers Dereck and Beverly Joubert, 'Odyssey' is certainly an apt term for the 30-year journey these two have undertaken. The documentary features some fantastic footage of the big cats.



● **GREATER KRUGER: A POCKET MEMENTO** by Heinrich, Philip and Ingrid van den Berg. Text by Keri Harvey, £8.99 This pocket version of the African wildlife photography book by the Van den Berg family works well, as the images still have a feeling of immediacy even after being scaled down. The book shows the positive side of man's interactions with nature, as well as the problems, and seeing a dedicated team of naturalists carefully monitoring the lion population for disease is quite heartwarming.



● JJ WALLER'S BRIGHTON VOL: 01 by JJ Waller, £11.99

Brighton is a street photographer's dream, and JJ Waller's book of images from the city is a fun, colourful read, with Brightonians chipping in with their takes on the city's appeal. Many opine that Brighton is hard to 'get' without living there, and indeed people who haven't may find the book a little alienating. The converted, however, will lap it up.

Letters

Share your views and opinions with fellow AP readers every week

LETTER OF THE WEEK

SMALLS SHOPS SUFFER IN TRADING FREE-FOR-ALL

It was interesting to read the camera dealers' comments about the reasons for Jessops' failure (News, AP 2 February), as I had a similar conversation with the owner of a local small camera shop just recently.

While there are good online retailers, there are also many who sell very 'grey' imports. They offer no after-sales service, but sell goods at way below the 'normal' price. This isn't the whole story, though, as the big makers have long offered discounts and priority to the large retailers like Jessops that they deny to small camera shops. And whereas many years ago all camera shops bought from wholesalers, today it is cheaper to buy from Amazon, for example, than camera wholesalers. Small camera shops seem to have been very much discriminated against.

However, all our high-street shops suffer because of the same problem – online retailers selling below cost or wholesale prices. In Germany, unlike in the UK, there is an Unfair Competition Act (UWG) that makes such trading illegal. Clearly, we need a comparable law here, instead of a free-for-all that, while initially offering short-term gains for the consumer, has decimated our high-street shops. This will eventually result in much reduced competition, higher prices, and worse service and rights for the customer. It is disingenuous of politicians to say, 'It's the customer's choice', because the customer only sees today's bargain price and not tomorrow's consequences.

Perhaps AP could follow its lead of campaigning for photographers' rights with a campaign to introduce an unfair competition law here. It would certainly be a first step to regenerating small shops and the proper customer service that we used to have. **Keith Longmore, Norfolk**

It seems there is nothing we like more than a gladiatorial price war, with the promise of death to all parties – *Damien Demolder, Editor*



Write to...

'Letters' at the usual AP address (see page 3) fax to 020 3148 8130 or email to amateurphotographer@ipcmedia.com

*Please indicate whether you would like to receive Fujifilm film or a memory card (please state type preferred) and include your full postal address

Backchat

Send your thoughts or views (about 500 words) to 'Backchat' at the usual AP address (see page 3). A fee of £50 will be paid on publication

AUTHORITATIVE LIST REQUIRED

It was refreshing to hear of somewhere that welcomes photography, in Michael Duffy's letter in AP 12 January, regarding Tameside Council in Greater Manchester. In his letter, he notes the contrast in attitudes between different councils, noting the 'bad' example from Merthyr Tydfil – a council that wanted to ban photography at a public event. We have had the example of a mayor not wanting to be photographed with an Olympic torch, and numerous examples of security guards and police trying to put a stop to lawful photography.

Obviously, there are too many examples for AP to follow up on them all, but it would be really interesting to have a list of those local authorities people have reported problems to AP about, whether it be council officials, security guards or police.

Jill Beeton, via email

COUNCIL CUTS PANNEED

We heard about Michael Duffy's letter in AP 12 January, as some of our members happen to be keen photographers, and might have been interested in learning of councils with good and welcoming attitudes towards photography.

Then we saw that Tameside is in Greater Manchester, Manchester being the place where they shut down all those public toilets recently. So, sorry, Tameside, some members with prostate cancer could not hold on that long to enjoy the photography there.

We'll have to make do with the nearer Thameside, around London, instead!

The Prostate Cancer Support Group (Redbridge), via email

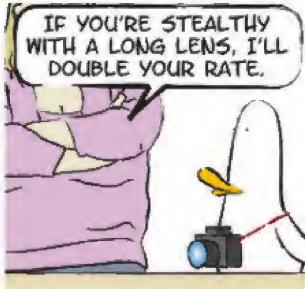
NOT THE ICING ON THE CAKE

With reference to Mr Seaman's sling disaster (Letters, AP 26 January), I have been using a tripod-screw-attached sling rather than a neck strap for a couple of years now, and have never had a problem with 'unscrewing' or any other serious failure. The sling I use is a Quick Strap, which I bought from eBay. My Nikon D90 plus Speedlight SB-900 flashgun and 18–270mm zoom lens have proved no problem for it. Overall, I love slings, finding them much more comfortable than neck straps and recommend them to my friends.

However, it has not all been plain sailing. I often carry my Nikon while walking my 54kg rottweiler, Humphrey, who occasionally gets caught short and produces a steaming mound. The problem with Nikon cameras on slings is that as I bend down to clear up the 'double bagger' (I am, of course, a responsible dog owner and am always equipped for such eventualities), the Nikon suddenly swings round from its normal position at my hip in a wide and graceful arc. Unfortunately, at the end of that arc is Humphrey's stinking pile. The upshot is that there is often a liberal addition of brown 'icing' on my camera's top-plate.

The good news is I can verify that the Nikon has suffered no lasting damage and

What The Duck



<http://www.whattheduck.net/>



KEITH HUGHES

THEY NOSE WHAT LOVE IS

I took the picture (above) in the New Forest, Hampshire. It was not posed in any way and I did not know the lady who was walking her dog. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time. As the dog approached the horse, they just headed for each other. Luckily, I had my camera at the ready and got this once-in-a-lifetime shot. I thought it would be suitable for your Valentine's Day issue. **Keith Hughes, Surrey**

can be quickly repaired using anti-bacterial wipes, but I admit to being hesitant about using it in anything other than live view mode for a while.

Ade Brownlow, North Yorkshire

Well, that's one hotshoe attachment you could do without – *Damien Demolder, Editor*

COPYRIGHT GRIPE NEEDLESS
I know that copyright is a touchy subject, but I can't believe the belly-aching from Gordon Wright regarding the theft of his image (Letters, AP 2 February). I'm sorry, Gordon, but when you gave the author the picture, did you explain that you retained copyright? Did you not have a handy contract about your person for him to sign? I admit that an author should be well aware of the rights concerning the written word, but it may be that he was unaware of your position as a professional and the status of the image. Rather than theft, it sounds to me like an innocent mistake. Get over it!

Bill Winward, Wiltshire

APPRECIATION IS ENOUGH

I am sorry that Gordon Wright (Letters, AP 2 February) felt his generosity had been taken advantage of when he received a correspondence from the widow of a recently dead author, stating that a photograph he had 'given' to her husband some time in the past had been used at the author's funeral. I would have thought that the fact she had written to tell him what she had done with the photo, and therefore how much it was appreciated, would, in the circumstances, be reward enough in itself. Sometimes there's more to life than money.

Terry Fallis, via email

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Thank you for a comprehensive review of the new Canon EOS 6D (AP 26 January). I read about all the new features, and was particularly impressed with the low-light capability. However, as an EOS 5D Mark II owner (courtesy of a tax refund!), the only feature that really made my mouth water was the in-camera HDR mode. So I am bound to ask, do you think there is any possibility that Canon could offer this on the EOS 5D Mark II as a firmware upgrade? I have my fingers crossed!

Andrew Stefanowski, via email

Keep your fingers crossed, Andrew – *Damien Demolder, Editor*

NEW CAMERA – IN RAPTURES

After reading your recent report on the Canon PowerShot SX50 HS (AP 19 January), I bought one. No sooner had it arrived than I looked out into the garden, and there was a sparrowhawk that had just caught a crow or a blackbird. I quickly got my new camera out and put it onto the maximum telephoto setting, then took this photo (below). It was amazing luck for me, but not so lucky for the bird that was caught!

Thanks for your report on the camera!

Richard Chamberlain, Suffolk



GC BACK CHAT

AP reader William BJ Spencer believes that one-upmanship is on the increase among photographers

THE TECHNOLOGY debate has seemingly become more of an important aspect in our hobby/profession than it has ever been before in my picture-taking life. Ten years or so ago, most of the 'serious' photographers around me were using SLR cameras with ISO 100 or 200 colour film. If mono images were required, the film had to be replaced – which is not exactly convenient when you've used only half a dozen exposures – or you had to switch to another camera fitted specifically for black & white shooting. This deterred many people, including myself, from ever being able to experience the nuances that monochrome can produce.

Fast forward to today and most of us can afford a DSLR of some kind, allowing us to take poster-sized photos in colour or black & white at the press of a couple of buttons. I have no doubt that this is the reason behind the recent resurgence of black & white imagery, and even compact cameras now produce A3-sized prints in whichever tonal form is preferred.

So, after this decade of huge advancement, you would have thought that all photographers would be a pretty happy bunch. Yet this doesn't seem to be the case. A recent contributor to AP stated that he'd like as many megapixels as possible on his DSLR. This would provide even higher resolution and greater dimensional possibilities when – or if – they were printed. I'd like to point out that those of us who do actually print our images rarely do so at a size larger than A4. Any compact system camera or decent compact can achieve this with no discernible difference in quality.

Snobbery is, for me, playing on people's choices and opinions, and the terminology that is frequently used to market the DSLR range – such as entry-level, mid-range, enthusiast and pro – only accentuates this. I don't see why those of us who have chosen to spend £400–£500 should be deemed to be any less of an 'enthusiast' than someone who has spent £1,000–£2,000 on their camera. Let us remember that, not so long ago, Canon and Nikon's flagship models, the EOS-1D Mark II and D2X, yielded a mere 8.2 million pixels and 12.4 million pixels respectively. In 2006 these cameras were the desired tools for most pro photographers, but if these cameras were launched today they would be placed straight into the entry-level category.

The truth is that our position in the crowd is what is frequently fuelling the lust for increasing resolution. I doubt there are many who believe that their talent is being stifled by a lack of megapixels. What we have is fine – until those in our photographic circle have more. It's only then that the belief that we also need more kicks in. Competitiveness is a natural trait, but finding new ways to see and record subjects would surely be the more productive approach, rather than the relentless one-upmanship that has escalated within our craft.



JIM BRANDENBURG

For more than 30 years, Jim Brandenburg travelled the world as a photographer with *National Geographic* magazine. His work has been published in *The New York Times*, *Life* and *Time*, among others, and he has won numerous awards, including Kodak Wildlife Photographer of the Year by the Natural History Museum and *BBC Wildlife Magazine*. He is the chair of this year's competition. Every month Jim will share the story behind one of his nature images

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To see more of Jim's images visit www.jimbrandenburg.com

PHOTO INSIGHT

Jim Brandenburg talks about his shot of a glossy starling and Cape buffalo, and how being prepared can ensure that you don't miss the opportunity for a shot

THIS photograph of a glossy starling and a Cape buffalo was one that I came across quite by accident. My reason for being in the location was not to capture the shot, but when I saw it I instantly knew it was an image worth taking. I was on assignment in Kenya during the 1980s, working for *National Geographic*, where I was tasked with the slightly intimidating role of photographing rhinos. I was there to document the fact that rhinos were becoming an endangered species as a result of poaching for their horns.

On these kinds of trips you don't tend to do a lot of walking. Most travelling time is spent within the relative safety of a Land Rover. We were driving along and suddenly it started to rain. I peered out of the window and saw the scene you see here. I didn't have much time to think about it, although I wasn't under as much pressure as I have been with some shots I've talked about in this column.

Before the auto functions of digital technology, we old-time photographers had to be ready for any shot that presented itself. We had to know our exposures and focus manually. We didn't have time to fiddle with the settings. With today's cameras, you can just shoot and shoot. For the photograph here, I would have already set my exposure, as the light would have been fairly consistent throughout the environment. I would have used Kodachrome ISO 64 film and a Nikon 300mm f/2.8 lens, which I used a lot on my shoots in those days.

With this in mind, photographers are



often haunted by a number of ghosts. Let's call them the ones that got away. The majority of photographs are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities and each image is unique, communicating something about that exact moment that no other photograph can. However, not all potential photographs are realised. Perhaps events took place too fast or the photographer simply wasn't ready. Think about all the potentially great photographs that never happened because the photographer was not quick enough or was too preoccupied with their exposure. You must always be prepared.

This image combines many elements for me, some of which function on the

subliminal level. There's a beauty about the gentle, delicate bird and the soft rain that is covering the scene. Then there is the thorny tree coupled with one of the most dangerous animals in Africa just out of focus in the background. You have contradictions here: the gentle and the savage, the beautiful and the foreboding. I often like to do this with my images, to bring together several contradictory elements of nature. Often, they'll line up within a shot in a kind of serendipity that has followed me throughout my career.

On a more basic level, I really like the composition and I particularly like the fact that it breaks the rules. One of my bugbears with a lot of the images I see



'Something about this picture makes me smile, and that's one of the best things you can say about an image'

these days – and it's something that affects students in particular – is a reliance on the rules. People will study photography and have these ideas and rules drilled into them, such as things have to be cropped right, everything has to be sharp and you have to follow the Rule of Thirds. I like the fact that the Cape buffalo is out of focus yet it still manages to be intimidating. It should go without saying that rules are made to be broken. Rules offer a false comfort

and you can only learn and develop your photographic knowledge through following your own path.

I may be mistaken, but it's my understanding that buffalo are one of the most dangerous creatures in Africa – perhaps the most dangerous. More people are attacked by this animal than any other in the country as the buffalo have very short tempers. Most people seem to see the buffalo as a cow, and for that reason they

aren't too afraid of them, but people need to understand that they have a fearsome reputation for a reason – they charge first and ask questions later.

I have a great deal of affection for this picture, although few people have wanted to publish it. It's very rare that it's picked out of my collection. I wouldn't go so far as to say that it's a great photograph, but it's definitely one that sticks out in my mind. I held a retrospective recently where I showed some of my favourite images, but this photograph wasn't included. Yet something about this picture sticks with me. It makes me smile, and that's one of the best things that you can say about an image. **AP**

Jim Brandenburg
was talking to
Oliver Atwell

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A dioptometer (vertexometer) also known as a lensometer is as the name suggests a device for measuring and hence allowing for Quality Control checking of the dioptric "power" of lenses (inc. spectacle lenses), microscope, telescope, binocular and other instrument eyepieces. Nikon would use such a device themselves of course but also manufactured these for sale. Information on these early devices is scarce and our research is ongoing. Date of manufacture circa 1950s - 1960s.

It weighs 4340g. The serial number of this example is 4182. Apart from its metal construction there are Bakelite parts such as the focusing stage platform. This stage broke at some point but has been meticulously restored. Voltage 110v. POA



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HIGH-KEY MONOCHROME LANDSCAPE



MARTIN EVENING

Martin Evening is a London-based advertising photographer and noted expert in both photography and digital imaging. As a successful photographer, Martin is well known in London for his fashion and beauty work, for which he has won several awards. In 2008, he was inducted into the NAPP Photoshop Hall of Fame.

Martin has worked with the Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom engineering teams over many years and is one of the founding members of Pixel Genius, a software design company producing automated production and creative plug-ins for Photoshop.

His recent books include *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 4 Book*, *Adobe Photoshop CS6 for Photographers*, as well as the *Adobe Photoshop for Photographers: The Ultimate Workshop* series, which he co-wrote with Jeff Schewe.

Martin Evening's

Retoucher's Guide

Martin Evening explains how he merged a sequence of photographs taken during a snow storm to create a high-key monochrome landscape

SINCE I moved out of London, I have been busy exploring the local countryside. I have been waiting for it to snow so I could photograph the trees shown here. My plan was to create a black & white image where the trees were isolated in a sea of white. I decided to shoot a

sequence of photographs and merge these into a single panorama. This not only allowed me to extend the angle of view, but also to increase the pixel resolution of the final photograph. As it was snowing heavily when I took the photographs used here, I ended up

capturing a lot of blurred snowflakes, which did make the photograph look as though it had been shot using an extremely dirty sensor! As I explain in the following steps, to get around this I used the Spot Healing Brush in Photoshop to clean up the sky area. The end result is a high-key image where the focus has been kept on the trees. Some people may like to bleach the highlights out even more to create an extreme high-contrast look. You can do that, but I preferred not to distort the tonal range too much.

Before



After

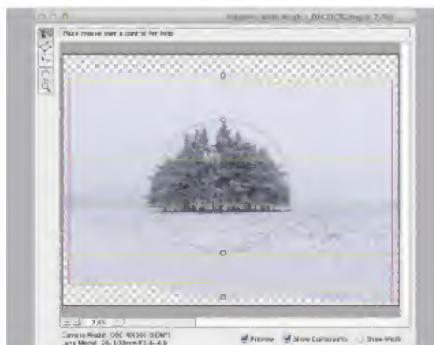




1 To create this image, I shot five photographs with the camera in portrait mode so that when these were selected I could create a single panorama image. In this instance I was working with Lightroom. I selected the photos shown here and chose Photo>Open as Layers in Photoshop.



2 Once the layered image had opened in Photoshop, I chose Edit>Align Layers to create the Photomerge result seen here. I then chose the Edit>Blend Layers option to blend the layers and merged these into a single layer.



3 Next, I went to the Filter menu in Photoshop CS6 and selected the Adaptive Wide Angle filter. I applied the horizontal and vertical constraints shown here to help correct the perspective where I felt it needed the most correction.



4 Having done that, I selected the Crop tool and cropped the image to trim the transparent areas.



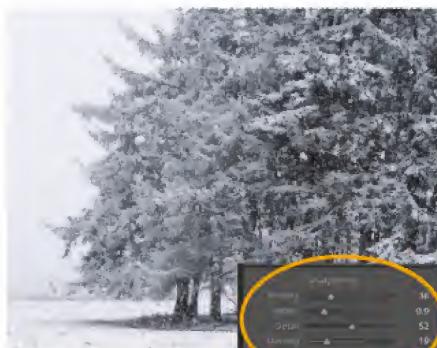
5 When I took the photographs used to create the panorama it was snowing heavily, which meant there were a lot of blurred snowflakes in this composite shot. As a result, the sky looked like I had shot this picture with a dirty sensor, so I used the Spot Healing Brush in Photoshop to remove the snowflake blemishes. I carried this out on an empty new layer above the image layer.



6 I saved the image so that the merged panorama was saved as a TIFF and, at the same time, automatically added to the Lightroom catalog. I then applied tone adjustments via the Basic panel in the Develop module, where I increased the Exposure to +1.0 and set the Contrast to +50. This produced the 'white-out' look I was after.



7 I didn't want the image detail to blow out everywhere, though. In this step I used the Graduated Filter tool to add a new gradient. I used a positive Exposure with negative Highlights and positive Clarity adjustment to lighten the foreground, but still preserving the fine detail and enhancing the blades of grass poking through the snow.



8 The original raw images were left unsharpened. I went to the Detail panel to apply some sharpening to the composite image. Here, I adjusted the settings to achieve a suitable sharpening that made the trees sharper, but without affecting the flat detail areas such as the sky where such sharpening might only emphasise the noise.



9 I converted the photo to black & white. Normally, one might want to explore adjusting the sliders in the Black & White panel. In this instance, there was very little colour information so a standard Auto conversion was all that was needed. Finally, I went to the Split Toning panel to apply a blue tone colouring effect to the photograph.

'Living with
Big Cats', by
Beverly Joubert



125 years of National Geographic

In 2013, the **National Geographic Society** celebrates 125 years of exploration, scientific research and photographic firsts...

FOUNDED in 1888, the National Geographic Society this year celebrates 125 years of scientific, geographic and explorative successes. Much like *Amateur Photographer*, the *National Geographic* (NG) magazine has been at the forefront of photographic developments for more than a century, and we take this chance to speak to professional photographers about what the magazine has meant to them.

THE MAJOR MILESTONES

In 1903, Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor became the first full-time editor of *National Geographic*. Over the next 51 years, Grosvenor used photography as his lens on the world, filling the pages of each issue with Egyptian tombs, Chinese canals, Canadian Rockies and back-garden insects. As soon as photographic processes made it possible, he introduced colour photos to the magazine. In fact, in 1914, Grosvenor's *National Geographic* printed the first natural colour photo: an autochrome depicting a flower garden in Ghent, Belgium. He also published the first natural-colour underwater and aerial photos.

It wasn't just as a visual art that the magazine was becoming important, though. During the Second World War, the society provided photographs, maps and other data to the US forces to aid war efforts.

The magazine also helped create a demand for photojournalists, turning writers and photographers into explorers.

Assignments for this new breed of photographer could mean uncovering a rare species or attempting world firsts, such as shooting the underwater remains of RMS *Titanic*.





© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK

The National Geographic-Army Air Corps balloon Explorer II prepares to rise, USA, 1935, by H Lee Wells

Did you know?

The National Geographic Society flag has been to the moon; to Earth's highest point, Mount Everest; to its lowest point, the Marianas Trench; and to the North and South Poles.

not least of which is the release of *Best of 125 Years*, a double-disc DVD collection that showcases some of the diverse and fascinating programmes from *National Geographic's* extensive film archive.

Included on the celebratory DVD is Joubert's *Big Cat Odyssey* documentary, a film about Joubert and husband Dereck's work with big cats over a period of 25 years (see Review, page 13). Following and identifying the problems with big-cat populations, Joubert says, 'The footage Dereck filmed and stills I created are a celebration of big cats as well as a condemnation of the politics and conservation effectiveness surrounding big cats that has resulted in their massive declines. We were witness to that, and we highlighted it, and

BIG CAT ODYSSEY

To celebrate its 125th anniversary, *National Geographic* has a series of events lined up,



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK

hopefully these images are a testament and a starting point for the discussion about what we do from here on out.'

Having worked as a photographer for more than 30 years, the path to success has not always been easy. 'My first batch of 40 rolls of Kodachrome, a season's work, were all stolen and I very nearly gave up my cameras,' Joubert says. Thankfully, she continued to photograph wildlife as well as producing films with her husband, and she has this advice to those who suffer similarly adversity: 'Lesson number one – never give up.'

Shooting mainly with Canon gear, including three EOS-1D X models, Joubert stresses the benefits of investing in high-quality lenses. 'I love Canon glass and keep lenses for ever,' she says. 'I change camera bodies as the pixel technology changes, but I think that photography is a special relationship between the mind, the eye and the lens. The camera is just the piece in between all that and largely disposable.'

Although the life of an NG photographer might appear glamorous, the reality is rather different. As Joubert explains, it is a lot of hard work and long hours. 'I'm up at least two hours before the light, finding a subject and waiting for the sun and the right light,' she says. 'We eat on the run, and work hard until dark. Even then, we stop, look around and see what is left of the day or of the light; a moonrise, a very low-light, motion-blur chase, something, anything to extend the day. We then return to camp, have dinner, download images, format cards,

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S PHOTO MILESTONES

13 January 1888

• Thirty-three founding members meet at the Cosmos Club, Washington, DC, to create 'a society for the increase and diffusion of geographic knowledge'

October 1888

• First issue of *National Geographic* is sent to 200 charter members

1890

• *National Geographic* publishes its first photograph – a glimpse of Herald Island, Russia, taken from the deck of a ship



© GILBERT S. GROSSE/NG COLLECTION

Left: One of several Olmec stone heads uncovered in Mexico since 1938, by Richard Hewitt Stewart

Right: The Mann Expedition, which visited the East Indies to collect exotic animals for the National Zoo, 1938, by J Baylor Roberts

Bottom right: Pre-Columbian Maya wall murals, Guatemala, 1984, by George F Mobley

Did you know?

During the Second World War, both British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and US President Franklin Roosevelt were so dependent on *National Geographic* maps that they even used one to sketch out the proposed occupation zones for post-war Germany.



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK

clean our gear, pack it ready for the next day, prep some food for early morning, and to take out for lunch, then bed by 9.30pm if possible and out at 4am for magic hour... return to top and repeat 280 days a year."

MAGIC MOMENTS

But all this hard work is worthwhile, as Joubert's photos show. It is hard for her to choose her proudest photo moment, but highlights include working with her Canon 600mm lens while photographing leopards, and shooting aerial photos of a zebra migration on the Makgadikgadi Pans in Botswana.

Another photographer who knows all about the rewards, and hardships, of working with *National Geographic* is Reza, one of the magazine's resident explorers and photojournalists, having documented beauty and conflict in the Middle

1906

- Gilbert H Grosvenor, the magazine's editor (pictured left), publishes George Shiras III's pioneering flash photographs of animals at night; two Society board members resign in disgust, claiming magazine is turning into a 'picture book'

1914

- First autochrome, or natural-colour photograph, is published in the magazine
- *National Geographic* staff photographer Charles Martin and scientist WH Longley make first natural-colour underwater pictures



© NICHOLAS ERICKSON/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

1929

- Richard E Byrd achieves man's first flight over South Pole, and photographs 60,000 square miles of Antarctica from the air
- National Geographic Society opens its storehouse of photographs, maps and other cartographic data to US armed forces to aid war efforts



1959

© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK

been creating really powerful images for over a century – through the magazine, the TV channels, website and through its conferences and education work.'

Discovering photography when he was a child as a way to communicate with those who could not speak his native language, the Iranian revolution of 1979 helped Reza focus his style, enabling him to capture the

Above left: The gold mask of King Tutankhamun at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, by Kenneth Garrett

Above: Dereck and Beverly Joubert photograph an elephant in Botswana's Savuti region, 1994, by Beverly Joubert

Left: An emperor penguin becomes an unwitting cameraman, by Greg Marshall

Did you know?

National Geographic inventor Greg Marshall has attached his Crittercam device to more than 60 animal species, gleaning information on their secret lives.

riots and demonstrations around him.

In 1991, he was invited to meet NG's publishers and offered an assignment in Cairo, Egypt. 'I asked what story they wanted me to cover and they looked at me, and the answer was one of the best moments as it allowed me to understand what the magazine was all about. They said, "Reza, we'd like you to tell us your story of Cairo."

THE NEXT PROJECT

Reza has gone on to create books, documentaries and exhibitions for *National Geographic*. Each project offers its own challenges, and the kit required to address them can alter dramatically. 'I was working in eastern Turkistan on a book about a people called the Uighurs, which was published in 1996,' he says. 'I had seven big boxes of equipment that I think weighed about 250kg – about five or six different cameras, lights, tripods, everything – because I was going for a long time and working in harsh climate conditions. In 2007, I did a cover story about Pakistan and there were four pictures that were taken with an 8-million-pixel Sony Cyber-shot.'

As Reza highlights, it is neither the kit nor a photographer's background that makes an iconic photo. Images that have graced the magazine's cover have often gone on to

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S PHOTO MILESTONES

1959

- Colour photographs begin to appear regularly on the cover
- Jane Goodall begins study of chimpanzees in Tanzania's Gombe Stream Park using National Geographic Society funds (see page 25. Photo by Hugo van Lawick)

1962

- John Glenn carries National Geographic Society flag on first US orbital space flight

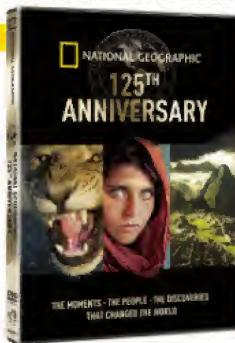
1963

- First Americans summit Everest in National Geographic Society-supported expedition
- Dian Fossey begins long-term Society-funded study of mountain gorillas in Rwanda



1969

- Apollo 11 astronauts carry National Geographic Society flag to the moon



WIN!

WE HAVE five copies of the *National Geographic* 125th Anniversary DVD up for grabs. Featuring legendary footage of people, places and moments that have changed our world, the DVD is a must-own. To enter, visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/competitions and send us one photo of your interpretation of a famous NG image. Upload your photos by Friday 1 March to be in with a chance of winning.

Above: The rusted prow of the RMS *Titanic*, North Atlantic, 1991, by Emory Kristof

Right: *National Geographic*'s Enric Sala dives with a green turtle off Cocos Island, Costa Rica, by Octavio Aburto

Did you know?

Aboard each of the two *Voyager* spacecraft now heading into interstellar space is a gold-plated record containing sounds and scenes of Earth – including nearly two dozen images provided by *National Geographic* – for the edification of any passing alien the craft might encounter.



become iconic. Think about Steve McCurry's 'Afghan Girl'. The image struck such a chord as to necessitate a follow up to find the girl in question.

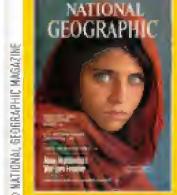
Some 125 years since its inception, the magazine has grown into a worldwide media

brand with digital platforms and a web of renowned photographers, but its ethos remains the same. And it is one we can all learn from – to be constantly questioning, exploring and recording the world around us, in photographs. **AP**

To see more of **Beverly Joubert**'s work, visit animals.nationalgeographic.co.uk/animals/big-cats or www.wildlifefilms.co. View **Reza**'s portfolio at www.rezaphotography.org

1985

• Results of RMS *Titanic* discovery announced at Society by Robert D Ballard



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE

1985

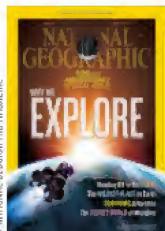
• Steve McCurry shoots his iconic photograph of a young Afghan girl for the magazine's June 1985 issue

2002

• *National Geographic* announces it has located Sharbat Gula, the 'Afghan Girl' (see left). Her photograph became the most recognised in the magazine's history

2013

• *National Geographic* turns 125



© NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE

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How to shoot Snowdrops



Heather Angel reveals the best techniques for capturing snowdrops – whether as floral carpets, clumps of flowers or macro shots of individual plants

AS A CHILD, I can recall how each winter my grandmother would send us a parcel of the first snowdrops picked from her Suffolk farm – all carefully packed in moss. That was decades ago. Now, we appreciate wildflowers beyond our own gardens left for everyone to enjoy.

After the bleak winter months, the first snowdrops cannot fail to uplift our spirits and encourage flower fanatics, as well as macro enthusiasts, to capture what are often the

first floral images of the year. However, while we marvel at extensive snowdrop carpets in British gardens and woodlands that have been cultivated here since medieval times, the flowers are not native plants.

SWEEEPING CARPETS

It takes a while for snowdrops to get established, so that clumps mass together and carpet the ground in great swathes of white and green. Any white flowers – and

snowdrops are no exception – are not the easiest to photograph in mixed light. A scene with extreme contrasts of bright sunlight and shadow areas means that the snowdrops and the shadows cannot both be correctly exposed. Therefore, the best days to take wider shots of expansive carpets are ones with a light cloud cover that functions like a huge diffuser, casting even light onto the ground below.

When photographing snowdrops, try to include a tree or two to provide height and scale, as well as a contrasting tone. The choice of lens will depend on how open the wood appears and will vary from a wideangle to a short tele lens. However, remember that the wider the lens, the smaller the

Backlit giant snowdrops flowering in January, in the Rock Garden at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, taken with a 70-200mm lens and a 1.7x teleconverter



TOP 5 SNOWDROP SCENES

- 1 SNOWDROP VALLEY**, Wheddon Cross, Cutcombe, Exmoor. Park and Ride service 2-24 February to the hidden valley. Tel: 07531 680 445. Web: www.wheddoncross.org.uk
- 2 PAINSWICK ROCOCO GARDEN**, Painswick, Glos GL6 6TH. Large snowdrop drifts and different types. Open daily 11am-5pm. Tel: 01452 813 204. Web: www.roccogarden.org.uk click on snowdrops
- 3 COLESBOURNE PARK**, Colesbourne, near Cheltenham, Glos GL53 9NP. World famous collection with 250 varieties over 10 acres. Open days: Feb 2-3; Feb 9-10; Feb 16-17; Feb 23-24; Mar 2-3. Open 1pm, last entry 4.30pm. Tel: 01242 870 264. Web: www.colesbournegardens.org.uk
- 4 NT ANGLESEY ABBEY GARDENS**, Quy Road, Cambridgeshire, CB25 9EJ. Snowdrop Festival 21 Jan-24 Feb. Tours depart 2pm weekdays. Over 240 varieties. Open daily 10.30am-4.30pm. Tel: 01223 810 080 to pre-book. Web: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey
- 5 NT FOUNTAINS ABBEY AND STUDLEY ROYAL**, Fountains Abbey, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 3DY. Landscaped garden with snowdrop carpets. Open daily 10am-5pm. Tel: 01765 608 888. Web: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/fountains-abbey



individual flowers will appear. A tripod is useful not only for eliminating any chance of camera shake, but also to gain a greater depth of field with the obligatory long exposure in a woodland on a dull day. In addition, a tripod slows down the working pace. This means more care is taken with the composition by making small tweaks to the framing – whether adjusting the camera angle or by zooming the lens in and out to get the best possible framing.

COMPACT CLUMPS

Having set the scene with a wide shot, move in closer to take a single clump. You will then appreciate the structure of the flowers better and be able to show them with various backdrops. Use items such as tree trunks, leaf litter or a wall, or have them emerging through ivy leaves on a bank, with other spring flowers such as winter aconites or planted in pots. By adjusting the camera angle, it is possible to alter the background so it enhances the flowers.

Above: When snowdrops emerge through leaf litter, the backdrop tonal contrast is better than snow



Left: Once the temperature reaches 10°C, snowdrop flowers open and bees may be seen foraging. Taken using a 105mm Micro-Nikkor lens and twin flash



FLORA CALENDAR

Missed the snowdrop season?
Don't despair, try one of these
flowers instead...



'A tripod slows down the working pace. This means more care is taken with composition'

It is also possible to modify the lighting. A diffuser will soften harsh direct front light (although snowdrops backlit by sunlight can appear dramatic), while a reflector, or even a flash, will help to boost the light in dull conditions. However, try to avoid using direct flash. Either slip a diffuser over the flash window or use a portable softbox. The Hönl Traveller 8 softbox has a 20cm diameter material diffuser that softens harsh light and reduces the shadows by casting a broader beam than a diffuser.

To photograph a clump of snowdrops, use a low camera angle so you have a side view of the flowers. A tripod that collapses close to ground level is particularly useful for this. The British-made Benbo does this speedily, simply by undoing the locking lever and adjusting the legs and centre column

Left: A Gitzo carbon-fibre tripod without a centre column has legs (here camo-covered) splayed out for low-level work

Right and below: Open flowers reveal the shape of the inner green markings – an X on the giant snowdrop (right) and a Chinese bridge on the common snowdrop (below). Both pictures were taken with a 105mm Micro-Nikkor lens in a sunroom with a portable softbox for the shot of the giant snowdrop



to the required angles. However, if you haven't used one before I would suggest you practise first without a camera attached, since the movements are unlike any other tripod. I can recall someone suggesting it is akin to picking up bagpipes for the first time!

Any tripod without a centre column, or with a short one, will also work low down – including some of the Gitzo carbon-fibre models. Check before buying a tripod that it is versatile enough to work both at eye level and anything in between this and ground level, and that you can adjust it quickly.

SNOWDROP PORTRAITS

Only when you get in close to a single snowdrop flower can you appreciate how the shape and the green markings on the inner tube vary between species and cultivars. In severe weather snowdrops remain closed, but once the air temperature rises to 10°C and their pollinators begin to become active, they open out to reveal the green markings on the inner tube. A few snowdrops have golden markings

instead of green. The scientific name for snowdrops is *Galanthus*, and enthusiastic collectors of snowdrop varieties are known as galanthophiles.

Most of the snowdrops found in the wild have been here for centuries. However, some gardens grow many varieties. For a list of gardens with snowdrops visit www.greatbritishgardens.co.uk/snowdrops.htm.

The best way to show the variation in snowdrop markings is to use a macro lens. Otherwise, select the macro setting on a zoom lens or on the camera itself. If you have a DSLR, one way of getting in close is to attach a close-up accessory lens to the front of a standard lens.

Try to work on a calm day, otherwise it can be difficult to focus accurately and, if possible, use a tripod. If you have bought some potted snowdrops, photograph them in the pot before planting, as it is much easier to work at a waist-high table than at ground level, and you will also be able to choose the background. I sometimes use black velvet. I know it's unnatural, but it sets off any colour well. Otherwise, I use out-of-focus lawn. The pot is placed on a lightweight table that can be moved around the garden. In my case, I use the terrace above the lawn (but a stool or low stepladder would also work), so the grass is automatically thrown out of focus, even when I stop the lens right down.

The time span for shooting snowdrops is very weather dependent, being prolonged by a cool spell and shortened by mild weather, so if you are visiting a garden make sure you call first. **AP**

For more information about snowdrops, visit www.snowdropinfo.com/galanthus_images2.htm

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ReaderSpotlight



Kyle Moore Suffolk

Although just 14 years old, Kyle Moore has been taking photographs since 2010 and is still loving every minute of it. Living in Suffolk provides him many opportunities to photograph his favourite subjects – animals and the natural world. 'I just love being out in the wild, watching all the great wildlife we have,' he says. 'I love the challenge of trying to get something different from an often-seen animal.' Moore would like to be a professional photographer, and plans to explore different parts of the British Isles to build up his wildlife portfolio. To see more of his images, visit his website at www.kylemoorephotography.co.uk.

Red deer stag

1 The golden sunlit mist illuminates the deer and gives this image a gorgeous tone
Canon EOS-1D Mark III, 100-400mm, 1/400sec at f/5.6, ISO 640, tripod

Little owl

2 A fast shutter speed caught the owl in this terrific pose
Canon EOS-1D Mark III, 300mm, 1/2500sec at f/4, ISO 400, tripod, 1.4x converter

Young adder

3 The colours of the adder stand out well here
Canon EOS-1D Mark III, 70-200mm, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 400, 25mm extension tube, tripod

Adder close up

4 The shallow depth of field is perfect for this image
Canon EOS-1D Mark III, 70-200mm, 1/640sec at f/4, ISO 400, 25mm extension tube, tripod



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3



EDITOR'S
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Kyle Moore has got a great eye for detail. The moment of capture is spot on, and he has captured loads of personality and shown good technical ability, too – *Debbi Allen, deputy editor*

4





Frank Brooks Angus

Frank Brooks has been taking photographs since 1986, when his enthusiasm for his mountaineering hobby inspired him to buy a Zenit SLR to record images of the landscape. Since then, he has owned cameras from practically every notable manufacturer. He continues to combine his photography with his other hobbies, and in 2005 he landed a job writing a hill-walking column for the local paper, which he still does today. 'If I had to single out one particular genre, it would have to be landscape,' says Brooks. 'I am hooked on the Scottish Highlands and spend as much time in the hills as possible.' Brooks is set on expanding his talents, and next on his list is setting up a local portraiture business.

Snowscape in the Highlands

1 The angle of the snow works well against the flat clouds
Sony Alpha 200, 18-70mm, 1/320sec at f/18, ISO 200

Above the clouds in the Cairngorms

2 This breathtaking image makes great use of the light
Sony Alpha 200, 18-70mm, 1/640sec at f/8, ISO 400



3



Fog bow on Ben Macdui

3 A fog bow is a very rare occurrence that Brooks did well to capture in this shot, taken in sub-zero conditions
Sony Alpha 200, 18-70mm, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 100

Evening in the Mamores

4 The long shadows created by the evening light add another layer to this wonderful landscape shot
Sony Alpha 200, 18-70mm, 1/50sec at f/8, ISO 100

Black Cuillin, Skye

5 The ominous clouds at the top and the shadows at the bottom combine to form a pleasing frame for this image of rocky mountains
Sony Alpha 200, 18-70mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 100

4



5





Natashah Azim
Berkshire

Natashah Azim says she's always been a creative person, and found herself drawn to photography due to the emotion and meaning that could be communicated without the use of words. 'I love the freedom photography gives,' she says. 'It's a blank canvas and you have to add to it. It's all in your hands, similar to any form of art.' To see more of her photography, visit her Flickr page at www.flickr.com/photos/creative-illtography.

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AP Testbench

Over the next few pages we present this week's equipment tests, reader questions and technique pointers

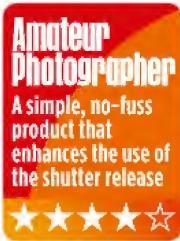


ProDot \$9.99 (around £6.35)

www.customslr.com

INITIALLY designed to improve the control of a camera's shutter button, the ProDot can also work well with any repetitively used finger-controlled devices, such as a computer mouse. It is a press-on, self-adhesive 'dot' that provides a raised and textured 'dampening' surface. In use on a DSLR's shutter release, the press of the button produces less strain on the finger because one does not need to depress the button as far or as hard. The result is not only a subtle reduction in vibrations when pressing the shutter release, but also a fractionally quicker response and a more comfortable action during intense shoots.

The adhesive on the dot is strong enough to ensure that it will not come off even when the camera is lugged around in a bag, but it is easy to remove by hand and leaves no residue on the camera. It is possible to reuse the dot many times without compromising its effectiveness. The dot is the right size for most DSLRs and CSCs, and is available in red, black and white, in a pack of two. **Tim Coleman**



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All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

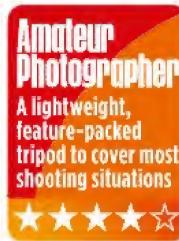
3 Legged Thing Eric Evolution 2 tripod £299.99

www.3leggedthing.com

ALTHOUGH listed in the firm's professional range, the carbon-fibre Eric Evolution 2 is lighter, at 1,360g, and has a thinner leg-tube diameter of 26mm than many dedicated 'travel' models. Few can match its excellent height range of 130-2,010mm. Fully extended, a mounted camera is way above head height, which is impressive, while the three-angle legs provide great versatility.

Features include a built-in monopod and a removable (and reversible) two-section central column, which has a stopper that doubles as a ballast hook. With four leg sections, Eric folds away to 500mm, which is a little large for a tripod with such thin legs. And while its '8-core' legs are strong with an 8kg maximum load capacity, being so thin they are less stable for heavy kit and in more extreme conditions.

For £379.99, Eric comes in a kit with a superb case and the Airhead 1. The head is well built, but has a slight drift angle once locked off. The two-axis spirit bubble is redundant in portrait format because the knob for the tripod plate does not allow a 90° angle. **Tim Coleman**



FORTHCOMING TESTS

In the next few weeks AP hopes to run the following equipment through the most rigorous testing procedures in the industry...

APS-C DSLR kit lens upgrades

We look at why you should upgrade your kit lens and what options are available
AP 23 February

Testbench: Six of the best

We round up the best single-strap 'messenger'-style bags and put them through their paces.
AP 23 February

Nikon 1 J3

The feature-packed J3 includes a burst rate of 15fps, new slow view mode and a 14.2-million-pixel, CX-format sensor without an anti-aliasing filter.
AP 2 March

Fujifilm FinePix XP60

Fuji's latest Tough compact camera has a 16-million-pixel CMOS sensor, 5x optical zoom and is waterproof to a depth of 6m.
AP 9 March

Fujifilm X100S

The X100's replacement has the same 23mm f/2 lens, but an improved 16-million-pixel Fuji X-Trans sensor, hybrid viewfinder and hybrid AF.
AP 23 March

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Going full frame

Last year, **Canon** released the **EOS 6D** and **Nikon** the **D600** entry-level full-frame DSLR, but what do these models offer enthusiast photographers wanting to upgrade and is this a good time to switch brand loyalties? **Richard Sibley** finds out

UNTIL a couple of years ago, owning a DSLR with a full-frame sensor was something of a holy grail among enthusiast photographers. A camera housing a sensor with the proportions of a 35mm film frame was generally the preserve of professional photographers, being too expensive for the average enthusiast.

Yet slowly things have changed, and the introduction of the Canon EOS 5D, Nikon D700, and Sony Alpha 850 and 900 started a shift towards making full-frame DSLRs attainable for the non-professional photographer. In September 2012, Canon and Nikon announced the EOS 6D and D600 respectively, their most affordable full-frame DSLRs yet.

With the D600 commanding a street price of around £1,450, and the EOS 6D a close £1,650, the two cameras are likely to find themselves at the top of many photographers' wish lists this year. Of course, for those already heavily invested in either system, making a decision about

which one to buy won't be too difficult. However, photographers using other systems or APS-C-format DSLRs may be open to either camera, and might consider this an auspicious time to sell their existing kit to subsidise a new full-frame model and a good lens.

FEATURES

The key reason for upgrading to either the Canon EOS 6D or Nikon D600 is to take advantage of the full-frame sensor. As a full-frame unit is physically larger than an APS-C-sized sensor, the additional surface area allows for either a higher resolution and more detailed images, or larger photosites and improved dynamic range and noise control. With both the Canon and Nikon sensors housing more than 20 million pixels, they each strike a good balance between resolution and not overcrowding the sensor, the latter of which preserves the advantage when it comes to noise and dynamic range. Both units are CMOS sensors, with the

D600 offering the higher resolution at 24.3 million pixels, compared to the 20.2 million pixels available in the EOS 6D.

To put the resolution of the two cameras into perspective, when printing a 300ppi image the Canon EOS 6D can create an 18.24x12.16in print, while the Nikon D600 produces a 20.05x13.38in print. Compare this to the 36.6-million-pixel Nikon D800, which creates a 24.53x16.37in print at 300ppi, and you can see that despite there being a 4.1-million-pixel difference between the EOS 6D and D600, this translates to very little in terms of image size. So while the extra resolution of the D600 may seem more appealing, it shouldn't be a deciding factor when choosing between the two models.

Typically, Nikon DSLRs have more AF points than their competitors, and the D600 is no exception. There are 39 AF points on the D600, with nine of those being the more sensitive cross-type sensors. All the standard Nikon AF points work at f/5.6, while the seven closest to the centre can work at an aperture of f/8.

In comparison, the EOS 6D has 11 AF points that are all sensitive to f/5.6, with only the centre AF point being a cross sensor. However, the centre AF point is extra sensitive when used with an f/2.8 lens, which Canon claims will improve focusing speed and accuracy.

Setting both cameras to their centre AF point and focusing in a very dimly lit room, I found that the EOS 6D was a shade faster and more accurate than the D600. In brighter light, however, there is no real discernible difference between the two cameras in terms of speed, although the larger

Facts & figures



Canon EOS 6D



Nikon D600

List price	£1,799.99 (body only)	£1955.99 (body only)
Street price	Around £1,650 (body only)	Around £1,450 (body only)
Sensor	Full-frame (36 x 24mm) CMOS sensor with 20.2 million effective pixels	Full-frame (35.9 x 24mm) CMOS sensor with 24.3 million effective pixels
Output size	5,472 x 3,648 pixels	6,016 x 4,016 pixels
Focal length mag	1x	1x
Lens mount	Canon EF	Nikon F
Max file size	Approx 34MB CR2 raw, 15MB JPEG (Large Fine)	Approx 29.2MB NEF, 12.4MB JPEG (Large Fine)
File format	CR2 (raw), M-Raw, S-Raw, JPEG, raw+JPEG simultaneously	JPEG, NEF (raw), raw+JPEG simultaneously
Compression	2-stage JPEG, 3-stage CR2 raw	3-stage JPEG, 4-stage raw
Colour space	Adobe RGB, sRGB	Adobe RGB, sRGB
Shutter type	Electronically controlled focal-plane shutter	Electronically controlled focal-plane shutter
Shutter speeds	30-1/4,000sec, bulb	30-1/4,000sec, bulb
Max flash sync	1/180sec	1/200sec (1/250sec max in High Speed mode)
ISO	ISO 100-25,600 (ISO 50-102,400 extended)	ISO 100-6,400 (ISO 50-25,600 extended)
Exposure modes	PASM, bulb, two custom, 7 scenes, creative auto, auto+	PASM, 2 custom modes, auto, scene
Metering system	63-zone dual-layer SPC evaluative metering, partial (8%), centreweighted, spot (3.5%)	2016-pixel RGB sensor, 3D Color Matrix metering II, centreweighted (75%) and spot (1.5%)
Exposure comp	±5EV in 1/3, 1/2 or 1EV steps	±5EV in 1/3 or 1/2EV steps
Exposure bracketing	2, 3, 5 or 7 exposures in increments of 1, 1/3 or 2/3EV steps	2 or 3 exposures in increments of 3, 1, 1/3 or 2/3EV steps
White balance	Auto, 6 presets (with fine-tuning), plus custom and Kelvin adjustment settings	Auto (2 types), 11 preset, 4 custom and manual, with fine tuning
WB bracket	Yes (3 frames in 1, 2 or 3 steps)	Yes (2-3 frames in 1, 2 or 3 steps)
Drive mode	Single, continuous L, continuous H, self-timer, silent single shooting, silent continuous shooting	5.5fps high speed, 1-5fps low speed, single frame, quiet shutter, self-timer, remote control, mirror up
LCD	3in Clear View II TFT, approx 1.04 million dots	3.2in, 921,000-dot TFT LCD
Viewfinder type	Optical pentaprism	Optical pentaprism
Field of view	Approx 97%	100% coverage (97% for DX)
Dioptr adjustment	-3 to +1 dioptre	-3 to +1 dioptre
Focusing modes	Manual, single shot AF, continuous AF, AI servo, AI focus	Single, continuous (servo), auto, manual, single-point, dynamic area, 3D tracking, auto area
AF points	11 points, cross-type central point	39 points (9 cross-type)
Dof preview	Yes	Yes
PC socket	No	No
Built-in flash	No	Yes (GN 12m @ ISO 100)
Cable release	Optional remote release	Optional remote release
Memory card	1 SD (UHS-I, SDHC, SDXC)	Dual SD (UHS-I, SDHC, SDXC)
Power	Rechargeable Li-Ion battery LP-E6	Rechargeable EN-EL15 Li-Ion
Connectivity	USB 2.0 Hi-Speed/HDMI mini	USB, HDMI, 3.5mm phones, GPS port
Weight	755g (including battery and card)	850g (including battery and card)
Dimensions	144.5 x 110 x 71.2mm	141 x 113 x 82mm

Canon, Woodhatch, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8BF. Tel: 01737 220 000. Website: www.canon.co.uk

Nikon, 380 Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 5PR. Tel: 0330 123 0932. Website: www.europe-nikon.com/en_GB

RESOLUTION, NOISE & DYNAMIC RANGE

These images show 72ppi (100% on a computer screen) sections of images of a resolution chart, with the Sigma 105mm f/2.8 macro lens used on both cameras. We show the section of the resolution chart where the camera starts to fail to reproduce the lines separately. The higher the number visible in these images, the better the camera's detail resolution is at the specified sensitivity setting.

Canon

JPEG ISO 100



RAW ISO 100



JPEG ISO 400



RAW ISO 400



RAW ISO 1600



RAW ISO 6400



RAW ISO 25,600



Nikon

RAW ISO 100



RAW ISO 100



JPEG ISO 400



RAW ISO 400



RAW ISO 1600



RAW ISO 6400



RAW ISO 25,600



Canon EOS 6D



Nikon D600

'Existing users of either Canon or Nikon DSLRs will have no problems with the handling of these two cameras when upgrading'

high-end enthusiast EOS 60D, but with touches such as the lack of a pop-up flash making it feel more like the EOS 5D Mark III. I won't go into the finer details of the handling of the two cameras, but suffice to say, the EOS 6D will feel very familiar to EOS 60D owners, and also those lucky enough to own an EOS-1D X. Like the EOS 6D, both these Canon cameras have four direct-control buttons positioned next to the LCD panel on the top-plate, rather than down the side of the rear screen.

The button layout of the D600 will feel even more familiar to Nikon owners, given that the basic layout is largely unchanged since the company's early DSLRs. A few buttons have shifted, or been reassigned, but the basic layout, with buttons along the side of the screen and a LCD panel on the top-plate, is roughly the same as that used on the D100 back in 2002.

One clear way of knowing who Nikon has targeted with the D600 is by the dial on the left-hand side of the camera's top-plate. Typically, this will either be used as a shooting-mode dial on entry-level and enthusiast cameras, or as direct buttons for changing image quality, white balance and ISO on Nikon's professional camera line. As the D600 features a mode dial and two control dials at the front and back of the camera, it is like a full-frame version of the D7000.

When it comes to build and handling, personal preference obviously plays a big part. There were no glaring issues with how either camera handled, although I do prefer the button layout of the D600. Having the buttons on the left-hand side of the rear of the camera rather than on the top-plate feels more comfortable to me, and a little quicker to use. However, the build quality of the Canon EOS 6D feels a little more professional. There seems to be fewer

joints, largely due to the lack of a pop-up flash, and the camera feels smoother and sleeker in the hand. The grip of the EOS 6D is also slimmer and deeper than that of the D600, which gives me a more comfortable, reassuring hold on the camera.

Existing users of either Canon or Nikon DSLRs will have no problems with the handling of these two cameras when upgrading. I also think that the handling of the Nikon D600 will feel familiar for Sony and Pentax DSLR users.

VIEWFINDER

A quick look at the specification suggests that the Nikon D600 has the better of the two viewfinders. It has 100% coverage with 0.70x magnification, compared to the 97% coverage and 0.71x magnification of the Canon EOS 6D. Both have -3 to +1 m-1 adjustable dioptres, with a selection of shooting and focusing information displayed through the viewfinder screen. Both cameras also have depth of field preview buttons. However, despite having slightly less coverage, the EOS 6D's viewfinder doesn't feel any smaller than the D600's. In fact, with one of the viewfinders held to each of my eyes, there was no noticeable difference in the size of the images. The EOS 6D's viewfinder may be slightly brighter, but there is very little in it.

Looking at both cameras from the perspective of someone upgrading from a DSLR with an APS-C-sized sensor, both viewfinders will provide a significant improvement.

IMAGE QUALITY

As predicted, with similar pixel counts the Canon EOS 6D and Nikon D600 both resolve around the same amount of detail. In our test chart images the D600 has a slight edge, but in



number of AF points on the D600 offers more flexibility.

One of the most attractive features of the EOS 6D is that it is the first DSLR to feature both built-in Wi-Fi and GPS connectivity. Having Wi-Fi built into the camera is a real benefit, as it allows remote live view from a mobile device or computer, which is useful for wildlife shooting or self-portrait shots. Just as important is the GPS. I'm fortunate to travel a lot, and the ability to record the exact location at which a picture was taken, wherever I am in the world, is a real benefit when it comes to captioning and archiving the images later.

Wi-Fi and GPS connectivity are also available for the D600, although they require the optional GP-1 GPS unit and WU-1b Wireless Mobile Adapter. Given the difference in price between the two cameras, it would be possible to purchase these two adapters along with the D600 for around the same cost as the EOS 6D – meaning there is even less difference between these entry-level full-frame DSLRs.

One advantage the D600 has is its built-in pop-up flash, which is lacking in the EOS 6D. The lack of a pop-up flash implies that the EOS 6D is aimed at a slightly more advanced user, as most professional DSLR cameras also lack such a flash.

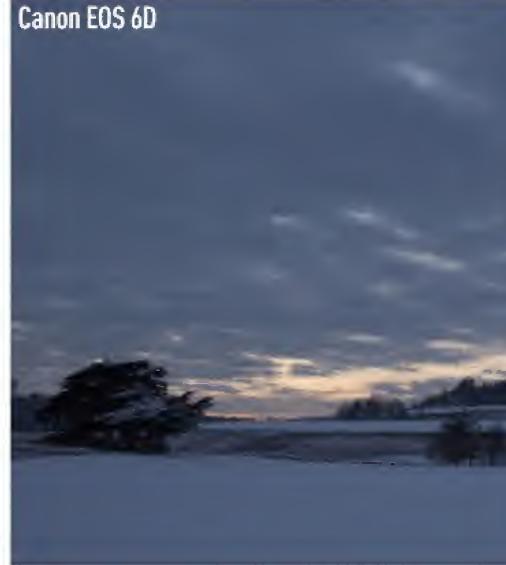
BUILD AND HANDLING

Despite both the Canon EOS 6D and Nikon D600 being similar in terms of specification, the EOS 6D feels the slightly nicer of the two cameras. Its body is more similar to the

In bright light, there is a difference of around 0.3EV between the 6D and D600 in evaluative metered exposures

In darker conditions, the difference in exposure is more obvious, usually from 0.7-1EV, with the Nikon producing the brighter exposure

Canon EOS 6D



Nikon D600





 real-world images, particularly of natural subjects, there is very little perceivable difference unless images are really scrutinised at 100%.

Where there is a difference is in the quality of JPEG files. Images straight from the EOS 6D are a little soft compared to those from the D600, which is something we have noted from a number of Canon cameras. This isn't the case with raw files,

which can be sharpened to reveal just as much detail as their Nikon counterparts.

The advantage of the full-frame sensors comes into its own when looking at noise in raw images. Although there is a hint of colour noise, and some speckling from luminance noise, images at ISO 3200 are perfectly usable. I feel that both cameras could do a little better in removing colour noise from JPEG images, as I

found it quite straightforward to remove this almost entirely from raw files. Of the two, the default noise-reduction settings of the EOS 6D may just edge those of the D600.

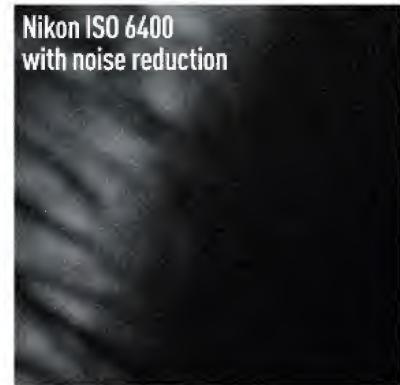
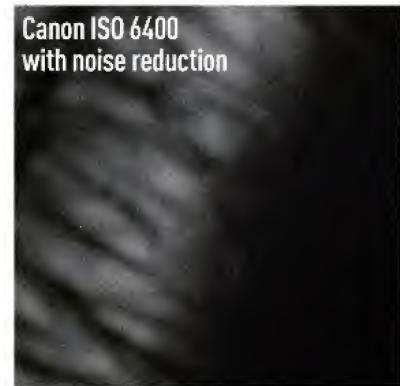
Looking at the raw files of both cameras give us a better indication of what the sensors are capable of producing. Again, there is very little to choose between the two sets of images. While colour noise

Above: Given the same exposure, there is very little difference in noise at ISO 400 between the EOS 6D and D600. However, images brightened by 3EV reveal that there is more noise produced by the EOS 6D



Left: Taken at ISO 400, there is very little difference in the detail in either image, although the Nikon D600 may just have the edge over the Canon EOS 6D

Many thanks to **Grays of Westminster** (www.graysofwestminster.co.uk) for the loan of a Nikkor 35mm f/2 D lens that was used for some of the images in this test



becomes visible at around ISO 1600, it isn't especially noticeable unless looking at 100%. By ISO 6400 colour noise is apparent, although I found that even at the very highest sensitivity settings on both cameras a quick nudge of the colour noise slider in Adobe Lightroom 4 eradicated virtually all trace of any colour noise. I would say that the D600 performs slightly better, with colour noise slightly less visible in shadow areas, particularly when the brightness of an image is edited.

Luminance noise is far more problematic, and it would be unrealistic to expect either camera to be perfect. Looking at the unedited raw files from both models, luminance noise starts to creep into images at around ISO 1600 on both, although luminance noise reduction only needs to be applied at ISO 3200. Even at ISO 6400, only a touch of luminance reduction, combined with colour noise reduction, is required to really smooth out an image. Obviously, it's always better to shoot at as low an ISO sensitivity as possible, but I would feel confident shooting with either camera at up to ISO 1600, and wouldn't hesitate to use ISO 6400 in low light. If I did have to shoot this fast, I would overexpose slightly and then darken the image post-capture, to help reduce noise further.

For those with either Canon or Nikon APS-C cameras, the image quality from either full-frame model will be a marked improvement. However, when shooting at low sensitivities, the Nikon D5200 and D3200 offer similar image quality and resolution if used carefully.

It's a similar tale for Canon users. Users of the 18-million-pixel Canon EOS 650D or 60D will see little difference in terms of

resolution when moving up to an EOS 6D, although there will be improvements to image noise.

METERING AND DYNAMIC RANGE

It is rare to find a camera that produces bad results when using evaluative metering, and neither the Canon EOS 6D nor the Nikon D600 bucks this trend. However, there are differences in how each camera meters a scene. I found that in good lighting conditions, the evaluative metering of the EOS 6D consistently produces exposures that are 0.3EV darker than those of the D600. In dull light, there is a greater difference in exposure, with the D600 producing images that are typically 0.7-1EV lighter. In low light, it is the darker exposure of the Canon camera that is more representative of the scene.

Given that the EOS 6D produces fractionally more noise than the D600, it may actually be advantageous to increase the exposure slightly where possible and then darken in software to help reduce image noise. However, this latest generation of Canon imaging sensors typically have a lower dynamic range than their Nikon counterparts. By reducing the metering, it could be an attempt to preserve more highlight detail, although often much of the dynamic range is actually in how much detail can be recovered from shadow areas.

Given some challenging lighting conditions, both the D600 and the EOS 6D coped very well with highlight detail that was at risk of being completely lost. Detail that looks to be completely lost in JPEG images can be recovered in raw files produced by both cameras, which makes them good options for landscape photographers.

Both cameras can recover shadow detail well from raw files, and it is possible to recover detail in raw files from areas that look solid black in JPEG images. The D600 has a slight advantage when covering shadow detail due to its lower levels of noise, which in turn means that fractionally more detail can be revealed. However, all this happens on a level of magnification that won't be noticed unless the images are analysed at 100% from just a few inches away. In real terms, it is hard to separate either camera, regardless of what the minute details of a test show. **AP**

Even at ISO 6400, colour noise can be almost entirely removed from images created from both the EOS 6D and D600

Conclusion

WHEN I was planning this head-to-head comparison of the Canon EOS 6D and Nikon D600, I was expecting there to be a greater difference between the cameras than there actually is. Each model has its own advantages and it is difficult to decide which is the better of the two.

The D600 has superior image quality, with a slightly higher resolution and wider dynamic range, as well as less noise. It also has a pop-up flash, which is useful even if only used as a wireless remote controller for other flashguns. However, the EOS 6D feels great in the hand and has the useful Wi-Fi and GPS connectivity built in, as well as displaying great colours in images straight from the camera.

I think the D600 just edges it, especially if the Wi-Fi and GPS connectivity won't be of use to you. For anyone looking to upgrade, neither camera really offers enough to warrant switching systems. For those switching to full frame from another manufacturer, such as Pentax, it isn't an easy choice, but again I think the D600 just about edges it. Pentax and Sony users will find the handling of the D600 more familiar, with a pop-up flash and better image quality.

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'The Nissin is well built, swapping the plasticky feel of other units in the range for a more solid construction'

Nissin MG8000 Extreme flashgun

If you're looking for a high-performing flashgun that will work all day, **Nissin's MG8000 Extreme** could be the one for you – especially when combined with the external **Power Pack PS300**. **Ian Farrell** tries them out

ALTHOUGH third-party flashguns, such as those from Metz, Nissin and Sunpak, are often competitively priced compared to proprietary units, they often lack a few of the more refined features. However, Nissin's latest flashgun is different. The MG8000 Extreme does not set out to compete on affordability, but promises better performance than you might expect from a Canon or Nikon unit. It is aimed squarely at the serious amateur photographer or professional photographer who shoots press, wedding or PR work and, as such, promises better build quality, too.

BUILD AND HANDLING

Compared to Canon and Nikon flashguns, the Nissin unit is less complicated to use and its user interface is less cluttered. A

small colour LCD screen displays only the information needed at the time, and usefully rotates through 90° when shooting in portrait orientation. A set button and four cursor keys provide navigation through the various menu options, although the speed and responsiveness of the menu system leave a lot to be desired, being very slow.

The front of the flashgun sports a low-light focusing beam and a small auxiliary flash unit. This is designed to fill-in shadows when the flash is being used in bounce mode. Other units use a small reflector that extends from the head of the flashgun and bounces a small amount of light forward, and this seems to work well, so Nissin could be accused of using a sledgehammer to smash a nut here. The auxiliary flash must

The Nissin MG8000 Extreme and Power Pack PS300 should allow you to shoot all day without the danger of the flash overheating

be turned on using the flashgun's menu system.

A connector for flash x-sync, a USB connection for firmware upgrades and a socket for an external power pack can be found under a flap on the side of the unit.

The Nissin is well built, swapping the plasticky feel of other units in the range for a more solid construction. It is accompanied by a flash diffuser for focal lengths wider than those covered by its 24-105mm zoom head, as well as a foot that enables the unit to stand up by itself or be attached to a tripod.

FEATURES AND SPECIFICATION

Nissin quotes a GN (guide number) of 60m @ ISO 100 at a zoom setting of 105mm, which is more powerful than both the Nikon SB-910 Speedlight (48m @ ISO 200 at 105mm) and Canon's Speedlite 600EX-RT (60m @ ISO 100 at 200mm). Importantly, the Nissin promises more than 1,000 flashes before any danger of overheating, thanks to a ceramic heat shield and quartz flash-tube technology.

Excess heat in flashguns can be a real problem, and this has led to many photographers having to take a break from shooting to let their equipment cool down, resulting in a loss of spontaneity and even missed picture opportunities. The Nikon SB-900 is particularly well known for this issue.

I tested the Nikon version of the MG8000 Extreme using a Nikon D700 and D800.

The flashgun supports the features of Nikon's Creative Lighting System (CLS), namely iTTL flash metering, high-speed sync at shutter speed up to 1/8000sec, stroboscopic shooting and rear-curtain sync for moving objects. On Canon units the flashgun supports the specification of E-TTL II metering, and the same shooting modes and features as the Nikon unit.

The MG8000 Extreme shoots in auto, TTL, strobe or wireless mode, and there's a settings option that is home to a modelling light, fine-tuning of flash output and other custom functions. In wireless mode, the flashgun can function as a master or slave unit, and impressively, it integrates well into multi-flash set-ups containing Nikon units. I managed to get a Nikon SB-900 Speedlight and the Nissin MG8000 Extreme to work together happily.

NISSIN POWER PACK PS300

POWERFUL flashes such as the Nissin MG8000 Extreme are limited by their power source, which is usually four AA batteries, but like other top-end flashguns, it accepts an external battery pack.

The Nissin Power Pack PS300 contains a single 3,300mAh NiMH rechargeable cell in a box that can power up to two flash units at once, from Nissin, Canon, Nikon or a mixture. Nissin claims the battery pack shortens recycle times by one-quarter. From a full-power discharge, the MG8000 Extreme flashgun was ready in less than 1/2sec. Shooting in TTL mode at middle distances and apertures, the unit kept pace with the Nikon D700 in continuous mode at 5fps for more than 50 shots without overheating or missing a single flash.

A battery pack can add £314 to the cost of your set-up, but if you shoot sports or fashion with strobist kit it may be worth it. Together, the MG8000 Extreme and Power Pack PS300 offer the recycling power of a mains-powered studio flash with TTL flash metering.

Amateur Photographer
★★★★★

PERFORMANCE

 Straightforward flash shooting is as easy with the Nissin MG8000 Extreme as it is with any other flashgun. Just mount it in the camera's hotshoe and away you go. Exposures with the Nikon cameras are excellent and the results no different from the SB-900 Speedlight. Recycling times are quicker, though, thanks to the Nissin's extra power.

Bounce flash is also well exposed, although the auxiliary fill-in unit appears to do its own thing and not be factored in the TTL flash exposure. I had to manually throttle it back to prevent overexposure – a simple reflector card would be much more convenient.

Nissin claims the MG8000 Extreme won't overheat as easily as other flashguns, and will persist for at least 1,000 shots. I couldn't quite test this claim to the full, since the four AA batteries that power the unit tend to give out way before this point, but shooting repeatedly at full power certainly didn't trigger the same cooling-down pause we've seen with other flashes, so full marks here.

Facts & figures

Nissin MG8000 Extreme

RRP	£645.40
Street price	Around £450
Guide number	60m @ ISO 100
Flash modes	E-TTL, E-TTL II, i-TTL, i-TTL-BL, manual/Av, multi flash (strobe)
No of flashes	150-1,500x (depending on mode)
Colour temperature	5,600K
Wireless	Yes
Power source	Four AA batteries
External power	Yes, via Power Pack PS300 (around £330)
Dimensions	78x148x127mm
Weight	416g without battery
Accessories supplied	External flash diffuser, soft pouch, flash stand with tripod screw

Nissin Power Pack PS300

RRP	£349.99
Street price	Around £330
Power source	7.2V 3,300mAh NiMH battery
Battery life	200x of charge/discharge
Charging time	Approx 4 hours
Outlet	2x DC 315V
Number of flashes	300 full flashes per charge
Dimensions	300x110x35mm
Weight	980g with battery

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Verdict

IF NISSIN has set out to provide a genuine alternative to top-end Canon and Nikon flashguns, it has succeeded. The performance of the MG8000 Extreme is excellent. It offers consistent, accurate performance in a unit that doesn't overheat, which will be music to the ears of anyone shooting strobist fashion and location photography, or press work. Combine it with the Power Pack PS300 and you'll enjoy recycle times as good as any studio flash.

Despite the extra performance, the Nissin MG8000 Extreme has a competitive street price of around £450, compared to about £340 for a Nikon SB-910 Speedlight and around £470 for a Canon Speedlite 600EX-RT. However, these camera-manufacturer guns do have a few additional features, such as radio triggering on the Canon unit.

If power and quick recycling are your thing, the MG8000 Extreme is well worth a look, and fits in very well with an existing strobist set-up.

Amateur Photographer
★★★★★

STROBOSCOPIC PHOTOGRAPHY WITH HIGH-SPEED FLASH

A GREAT thing to try with a high-powered flash is stroboscopic photography. Show the movement of a subject by shooting it in dark conditions with a long exposure, lighting the action with a burst of flashes each a few milliseconds apart. Guns like the Nissin MG8000 Extreme are great for this, with fast recycle performance from the battery pack helping to keep the action going without lengthy pauses between shots.

Shooting multiple flash images like this can be fiddly and requires some skill and patience to get right.

1 SET-UP

Shoot in a dark room so no other light affects the exposure, and shoot against a black background so you can see the moving object in the foreground. Try to have your subject standing off the background slightly; the extra flash fall-off will keep it dark.

2 EXPOSURE

Consider how many flashes you want and how often you want them. This will dictate how long the total flash exposure will be, which should be in line with the length of time taken for the subject to move. For example, our golf swing lasted about half a second, and looked good at a repetition rate of 40Hz. Therefore, the number of flashes required to make that a 1/2sec burst of flash was 20.

3 LIGHTING

To side-light the subject, use an off-camera TTL flash cord or sync lead, since wireless triggering while in multiflash mode is not an option. Alternatively – as we did here – have someone fire the camera shutter (or use the self-timer) and fire the flash manually during the exposure with the test-fire button on the flashgun.



This golf swing was photographed with a Nikon D800, a Nissin MG8000 Extreme flash and Power Pack PS300. Exposure was 2secs at f/8 and ISO 800 with a manually triggered burst of flash during the exposure – 20 flashes at a rate of 40Hz

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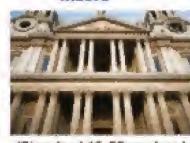
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Ask AP

Let the AP team answer your photographic queries

SCANNING OPTIONS

Q Recently, I was given numerous rolls of long-expired Fujichrome 120 film, so I took the opportunity to satisfy a 25-year-old desire to use the format. I picked up a Zeiss Ikon Nettar 515 from the Wolverhampton Camera Fair, which was already loaded with a Kodak print film I exposed the same day over a pub lunch. The results were satisfactory (considering I opened the camera back at the fair), but when I use the Fujichrome film what will be the most cost-effective way of scanning and viewing the resulting slide strip? **M Joannides**



A The most cost-effective solution will depend on how much film you've got and how much you intend to use in the future. If you've got just a couple of rolls and haven't yet decided whether you'll shoot any more, then the easiest option is to get the lab that processes your film to scan it for you as well. In this way you'll have your transparencies to archive, and a set of digital images to view, edit and share using your computer. I wouldn't recommend having prints made from the transparencies – it would be significantly cheaper to get them made from the digital files if you want any printed enlargements.

However, if you have a lot of rolls of film and intend to use your Nettar regularly, then investing in a scanner of your own is my recommendation. Of

course, you will still need to get your film processed, and doing your own scanning takes time, but there's no need to scan every frame you shoot – you can pick and choose the ones you want to work on further.

There is a limited number of medium-format scanners on the market due to the general decline in demand, but they are still available. At the lower end of the price range are Epson's Perfection V500 Photo (below) and Canon's CanoScan 9000F (left), both of which cost £150–£200, offer similar optical resolutions and are ideal if you just want to dip your toe in the waters of medium-format scanning. At the opposite end of the scale is the Epson Perfection V750 Pro, but that is closer to £600.

Chris Gatum



COMPATIBLE CAMERA

Q I have a Nikon F80 35mm SLR and, with a limited budget, aim to buy a DSLR – new or used. I would like to use it with my Sigma 17–35mm and Sigma 70–300mm zooms, as well as the Nikkor 28–80mm lens that came with my F80. Which camera would you recommend? **Tony Smart**

A The main thing that will determine the cameras you could use with your lenses is whether or not your lenses have built-in AF motors. If they don't, they will not focus automatically with many of Nikon's recent entry-level and mid-level cameras. For example, you will not be able to use AF with the D40, D40X, D60, D3000, D3100, D3200, D5000,

It may not be a recent model, but the Nikon D90 still holds its own as a stills camera



ASK...

Be it about modern technology, vintage equipment, photographic science or help with technique, here at AP we have the team that can help you. Simply email your questions to: apanswers@ipcmedia.com, via [twitter](https://twitter.com/afap_answers) or by post to: **Ask AP, Amateur Photographer Magazine, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.**

D5100 and D5200. You can still attach 'non-compatible' lenses to these cameras and focus manually, but I'd suggest that not having autofocus defeats the point of a new camera. The 28–80mm Nikon lens that shipped with the F80 doesn't have an AF motor built into it, but you would need to check your Sigma lenses – they will be marked HSM (HyperSonic Motor) if they have an integral AF motor.

However, although this means you won't have AF using your Nikon lens (and, most likely, your Sigma lenses) with the cameras listed, they are still fully compatible with a wide range of older and (current) higher-end cameras, including the D80, D90, D300 and D7000. You don't say what your budget is, but assuming it's around £500, the D90 would get my vote. It may be a little long in the tooth, but for photography (as opposed to HD video) it still holds its own, and is capable of producing stunning A3 prints. Expect to pay £450–£500 for a new camera, or around £300 for a mint, pre-owned example, body only. **Chris Gatum**

WHILE THE CAT'S AWAY...

Q When I sent a photo of our new kitten to my daughter, she passed it on to some friends and I later found out that it had been used on a poster by an animal charity without my permission. I would have happily granted the charity the permission, but I do feel I should have been asked. This has made me think very carefully about copyright, and particularly the wisdom of emailing pictures to

FROM THE AP FORUM

Wideangle or fisheye?

AJMullen1977 asks I take a lot of landscape photographs and have a Sony Alpha 55 DSLR. Can anyone advise me on the best wideangle lens or fisheye lens to use for the widest photos of the Scottish Highlands?

GeoffR replies Fisheye lenses are really a specialist tool and sell in small numbers – get

AP GLOSSARY

OPTICAL RESOLUTION (SCANNER)

Optical resolution is a term that's commonly used when referring to scanners, although it's also used when talking about digital cameras (often to differentiate it from 'digital zoom'). At its simplest, a scanner's optical resolution tells us how much information the unit's optical system can produce without any interpolation involved. This is important, because it is the optical resolution that

shows a scanner's 'true' potential. Take Canon's CanoScan 9000F, for example. This scanner has an optical resolution of 9600x9600ppi when scanning film, and 4800x4800 ppi when scanning printed material. In the case of film, this means that the scanner can produce 9600 pixels for each linear inch (horizontally and vertically) of film that is scanned.

INTERPOLATED RESOLUTION

While optical resolution is the important resolution figure for a scanner, some scanner manufacturers give an inflated, interpolated resolution top billing (following a basic 'bigger numbers are better' selling premise). However, you can generally ignore any interpolated resolution figure. This is because it is achieved using the scanner's software to

'upscale' an image. In this respect it is no different to increasing the size of a digital image using your editing software – in fact, your editing program can most likely perform the same job better. That said, the quality of your picture will be degraded slightly in either instance, as the software has to 'make up' pixels to increase the size of the image.

anyone. Do you think I should contact the charity? **Roger King**

A Copyright is a thorny issue, and one that's open to even greater abuse now that images are so readily available online in an easy to duplicate digital format. However, it still largely comes down to one fact: copyright (or 'the right to copy') is always retained by the person originating the work *unless* they relinquish that right in writing. Generally, that means signing something that says: 'Person A assigns copyright of X to Person B', with X being an image, a magazine article, or

whatever other material is being reassigned. At that point Person B becomes the copyright holder and Person A has no more rights over what is done with their work.

As you describe it, the incident involving your picture is a clear case of copyright infringement. You didn't say the charity could use your image (which would only provide them with permission to use it, not copyright), and you didn't sign anything to give them full copyright. At the very least you should request that they credit you for the image, and include contact details in case someone wants to commission more kitten photographs. **Chris Gatum**

a decent 12-24mm or similar lens and you will be fine. Very few applications make good use of the 180°-plus angle of view offered by a fisheye lens.

Bob Maddison replies If you want extreme wideangle, your best bet is a good tripod. Then you can take a series of photos and stitch them together to achieve a wideangle effect using Photoshop, or my own favourite, the free program Autostitch (autostitch.en.softonic.com). All you need to do is ensure that you use manual exposure so the exposure is the same for all shots, and to make sure that there is an overlap between your shots. Although we tend to think of stitching in terms of panoramas, the process is equally good for creating a wideangle effect, and at negligible cost compared to a super-wideangle lens!

PeteRob replies Do some research on the sorts of pictures you wish to take and the equipment used. Very wideangle lenses rely on foreground interest as the surrounding landscape shrinks. Images that give 'wide' impression are often composites, made by joining together several shots taken using a standard or even telephoto lens.

Thornrider replies A fisheye or extreme wideangle would be good if you like lots of grass in the foreground of your landscapes. I find myself using the 18mm end of a full-frame wideangle for what I suppose are industrial landscapes, but they have strong lead in lines, and so on. I think Joe Cornish said he rarely uses anything wider than 28mm (full frame), so maybe a 16-85mm lens would be OK on your Sony Alpha.

In next week's AP
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ON TEST

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AP AWARDS 2013

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If it's wet outside, don't stay in. Brave the elements and you'll be rewarded, says **Lee Frost**

AP GUIDE TO

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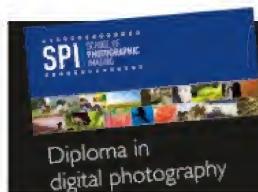
First Lieutenant **Alexander Jansen**, a serving US soldier, discusses photography in a war-zone

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Two of the first models launched in the UK

The two-lug version of the original Pen with 2.8cm f/3.5 Zuiko and four-speed shutter (left), and the Pen-S with 3cm f/2.8 Zuiko and six-speed shutter (1/8-1/250sec)

Olympus Pen

Ivor Matanle traces the history of the half-frame camera that led a revolution in the 1960s

BACK in the 1960s, it was not just the Beatles, Mary Quant and Harold Wilson who changed Britain. Nor was it only Nikon, Pentax and Minolta that brought Japanese innovation to amateur photographers. The Olympus Pen wrote a memorable page of photographic history and led several other manufacturers to compete for half-frame supremacy.

Designed by Yoshihisa Maitani, a very young but brilliant engineer at the Olympus Optical Company, the half-frame Pen cameras shot 72 exposures 18x24mm on a standard 36-exposure cassette of 35mm film. The resulting negatives or transparencies were remarkably sharp, brilliantly contrasty and, because of the short focal lengths of their lenses, displayed great depth of field. The cameras were easily pocketable and, in the early years at least, entirely mechanical. Despite being so compact, they were – and the



The 'new' camera in the 1963 advertisement

The Pen-D with 3.2cm f/1.9 Zuiko lens and built-in selenium-cell exposure meter. The Olympus Lens hood and UV filter are in front of the camera

early ones usually remain – very reliable.

Olympus Pen cameras became extremely popular worldwide, and by 1962/63, when Pen models were first generally advertised in Britain, the Olympus Optical Company had produced one million Pen cameras, having first been available in Japan in 1959. In October 1963, Pullin Optical, the original UK importer, was advertising in *Amateur Photographer* the Pen (the original version, although with two strap lugs rather than the

very earliest version with one), with 28mm f/3.5 focusing D-Zuiko four-element lens and four-speed Copal shutter, at £16 16s (£16.80). Alongside it was the Pen-S, which had been on sale in Japan since 1960. This was a slightly more sophisticated version with 30mm f/2.8 focusing four-element lens and six-speed shutter at £19 19s (£19.95). There was also the Pen-EE, with automatic exposure, 28mm f/3.5 and a

HOW MUCH DO THEY COST?

I bought my two-lug original Pen on eBay during the autumn of 2012 for less than £25. My f/2.8 Pen S cost £33 plus postage on eBay, including the original lens cap and a 22.5mm Olympus UV filter.

Examples of the selenium-metered Pen D turn up for £50-£70. The sought-after Pen D3 reaches prices of £200-£250. The various Pen EE models are comparatively cheap because the automatic exposure systems are unreliable.

single-speed shutter at £24 3s (£24.15), and the Pen-EES with a similar specification but two-speed shutter at £26 5s (£26.25).

The camera described in the ad as 'new' was the Pen-D, the 'deluxe addition to the range', with a six-element f/1.9 lens and shutter speeds from 1/8-1/500sec, plus a built-in selenium-cell exposure meter. It was normal at that time for amateur photographers either to use a separate handheld exposure meter or, when using black & white film, simply to estimate exposure. Impecunious photographers rejoiced in having 72 exposures available on a full load of 35mm.

The only reason for the half-frame revolution ending during the 1970s was the huge shift among amateur photographers away from black & white and colour transparency films to the use of colour negative 'print' film. Fast, cheap colour processing on the high street had not been available in the '60s, and when electronic mini-lab processing systems arrived in the mid-'70s black & white did not stand a chance for family and holiday photography. Minilabs rarely allowed for half-frame and 24x24mm, so half-frame and the Rapid system declined.

THREE GENERATIONS

By 1963, built-in exposure meters were all the rage and full-frame cameras like the Canonet and the Minolta Hi-Matic also provided shutter-priority automatic exposure. Olympus therefore introduced a version of the Pen camera with a built-in exposure meter – the Pen-EE. This was essentially a Pen camera body with a large circular honeycomb meter window around the lens and a selenium-cell exposure meter. The initial version had only a single shutter speed, the idea being that, with apertures from f/3.5 to f/22, you could arrive at a correct exposure for snapshot photography with any film then available simply by adjusting the aperture in accordance with the exposure-meter reading. Thus, there were now two streams of Pen cameras – the continuing S series without exposure meters, and the EE series with them.



Scarcie Pen W wideangle

This the later Pen W2 and 28mm f/2.8 Zuiko, with the lens focal length marked in millimetres. Picture courtesy of Peter Loy

Single-lug original Pen

The inside view showing the 24x18mm half-frame format. Picture courtesy of John Wade



Shortly afterwards, and one of the initial generation in Britain, came the Pen-D. This was only slightly larger than the Pen-EE, but it was equipped with a superb f/1.9 Zuiko lens and an exposure meter. The D-series wide-aperture cameras, with a full range of shutter speeds, became the third branch of the family, and were more appealing to experienced photographers who wanted a full range of capabilities and manual control. The Pen-D, in production from 1962-1966, became a popular camera and, while not common, can be found at camera fairs or on eBay. The much rarer Pen D2, with a battery-powered CdS (cadmium sulphide) meter, launched in 1964, is much sought-after by half-frame collectors. The Pen D3 with a 32mm f/1.7 lens, available from 1965-1969, was the ultimate Pen for many enthusiasts.

The all-black Pen-W, with a wideangle 25mm f/2.8 Zuiko lens, appeared in 1964, did not sell well and is now difficult to find

Top of the Pen-D

This shows the meter readout and exposure counter to 72, plus the black serrated wind knob



1959

Original Pen launched in Japan

1960

Pen EE (single-speed) appears in Japan

1962

Pen EES with f/2.8 lens appears in Japan

1964

Pen D2 with CdS meter appears

1965

Pen D3 replaces Pen D2

1973

Pen EE3 announced

1981

Pen EF launched

and expensive. I am grateful to Peter Loy for supplying a picture of one he sold recently (see top) The Pen-S reappeared with an f/3.5 lens and a six-speed shutter, and this became the basic camera of the range for another three years or so.

The initial Pen-EE had been replaced in April 1962, by a two-speed version, with speeds of 1/60-1/125sec, which widened the range of exposure values that could be accommodated, and thereby widened the range of film speeds that could be used in the camera. Alongside these cameras, the Pen-EES (made from 1962-1966) was launched with an f/2.8 Zuiko, further increasing the range of possible exposures under automatic control.

RAPID CASSETTES

In 1965, the Pen Rapid appeared that was designed for the Agfa Rapid cassette. This was a development of the pre-war Karat cassette, instead of the standard 35mm cassettes, and delivered 24 half-frame exposures per film. Very few came to Europe and it is now a rare camera. The Pen-EE EL of 1966 was a relaunch of the two-speed version of the Pen-EE, with the addition of the Easy Load system. Various other minor variants of the EE and EE2 appeared from 1966-1968.

By 1973, Olympus Pen sales were flagging, so the company launched the Pen EE3. This was essentially a re-badged Pen-EE2 and carried the flag of half-frame sales until 1986. Alongside it was launched the Pen-EF in 1981, the last model of the



Some of the Pen family

Top (l-r): Pen EE/EL, two-lug original Pen, Pen D. Bottom (l-r): Pen EE3 and two-lug original with white brightline finder panel



Pen series, and not designed by Yoshihisa Maitani. This was a complete redesign and included a built-in flashgun powered by one AA battery. The lens was a 28mm f/3.5 Zuiko, the shutter a programmed fully automatic unit providing exposures from 1/30sec at f/3.5 to 1/250sec at f/22. The Pen-EF is quite uncommon and not easy to find.

ACCESSORIES

As well as the full range of lens hoods and filters for each filter size in the range, Olympus marketed two different half-frame slide projectors with appropriately short

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE



A Canon Demi EE17, Canon's half-frame competitor to the Pen D3.



Pen D3

The ultimate Olympus Pen model with CdS exposure meter and 32mm f/1.7 lens

focal-length lenses and condensers for the tiny half-frame transparency. For copying work, there were sets of copy-legs, each designed to be used with a close-up lens enabling the camera to focus on a document or photograph placed on the table within the rectangle formed by the legs of the copy stand.

There was also an Olympus 38mm f/2.8 enlarging lens for Pen users but, in Britain at least, it is rare. Most Pen users who did their own darkroom work (I was one) used a 28mm camera lens, with either a homemade, or a bought-in, adapter to fit a Leica-thread enlarger. **AP**

Last of the line

The Pen EF with built-in flash and 28mm f/3.5 Zuiko and seven-speed shutter



WATCH OUT FOR

Lens

Check that the lens is unscratched. With the back off the camera, and the shutter open at 'B', operate the diaphragm ring and watch the diaphragm close to f/22. Check that the aperture stays circular. Fire the shutter at all speeds.

Camera back

I am indebted to John Wade for photographing his single-lug original Pen for this article, to Peter Loy for the picture of a Pen W, to John Marshall for lending a Pen D3 and a Pen EF to be photographed, and to Don Baldwin and Vic Rumak for supplying other cameras.

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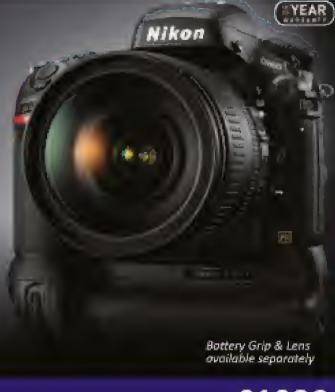
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CUSTOMER REVIEW: 650D + 18-55mm IS II

★★★★★ 'Nice little DSLR - Big improvements' MTA - Wexford

CUSTOMER REVIEW: 60D

★★★★★ 'Good allrounder for stills and video' Alonso - Cornwall

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★★★★★ 'Highly recommended, better than expected' Mono - Worcester

CUSTOMER REVIEW: 5D Mark III + 24-105mm

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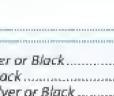
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We will match or beat ANY UK Think Tank price! Full Think Tank range in stock - below are just a few examples:		
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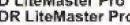
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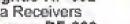
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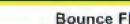
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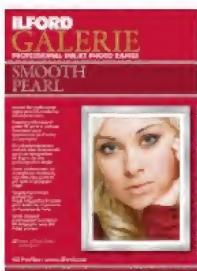
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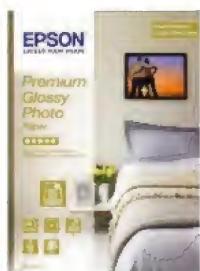
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OGDEN CHESNUTT

Why do manufacturers seem so intent on killing off their professional-level crop-sensor cameras?

SOMEONE once made the point that all the best images in the history of photography were made using cameras that are now out of date. I've often repeated this quip myself, but it really is a bit self-righteous, don't you think?

If they had been around in his time, don't you think Henri Cartier-Bresson would have used an articulated LCD screen? Or Robert Capa would have appreciated touch AF?

Photography is about finding great moments and a pleasing composition before it's about any particular process or button, and for this reason I don't think the old masters would be the Luddites many assume them to be.

It's 2013 and the first slew of new camera announcements were made at CES in Las Vegas, USA, with more to come surely, and with them will follow the predictable moans about too many 'bells and whistles'.

Remember when people raged about video? And live view? And articulated screens? And now Wi-Fi? I certainly do, because I was once among them!

OK, so 3D was a bit ridiculous, but what I find interesting is that the purists who say they have no need for features such as live view or touchscreen shooting are very happy to use the likes of autoexposure bracketing or focus lock. And I don't think Cartier-Bresson used any of those!

That said, I think perhaps the most interesting new feature introduced to the mainstream is one that even the purists can get behind: full frame.

Bringing full-frame sensors (a little closer, at least) to the enthusiast price bracket was a stroke of genius that will have more impact on your photography than any of the other bells and whistles I've mentioned.

And as more manufacturers rush to market with their own beginner full-frame models, prices will surely fall. In time, a bigger sensor will probably become the norm. And I suspect that affordable full-frame cameras should prove to be the next great equaliser in photography.

Yet for the life of me I can't figure out why they're doing it.

While it's great for photographers like us, do the

'Remember when people raged about video? And live view? And now Wi-Fi? I certainly do, because I was once among them'

companies not see that they're sabotaging some of their highly regarded crop-sensor cameras?

I'm at the pub where my mate Eli is boasting about his Nikon D600 purchase, telling all who care (which isn't many, but there's a polite crowd in this pub) how he's been shooting in pitch darkness, capturing amazing bokeh and generally singing his own praises as a photographer.

'Out of curiosity,' I butt into his monologue, 'why didn't you opt for a Nikon D300S? The price has really fallen, and it has a lot of nice professional features.'

And it's not just the D300S. Other professional-level crop-sensor cameras, like the Canon EOS 7D, have fallen dramatically in price. What one spends on an EOS 6D, one could spend on a 7D (with arguably more professional specs in terms of speed and AF) and a nice lens.

I know what he's going to say, though. The D600 is new. Those pro-level, APS-C DSLRs have been around since 2009 and could go at any minute. No one wants to buy a new camera that's outdated in a month. But most importantly... it's full frame.

It's hard to resist the appeal of full frame.

And the manufacturers

know this. So why, if these APS-C cameras are still current in their line-ups, are they killing them off with 'entry-level full-frame' options?

I think it can only mean we'll soon see a reboot of these ageing models. Perhaps a 7D Mark II, a D400, even updates to the D90 and D7000 and others of that ilk. But what features can we expect?

'What would have tempted you to buy a D400,' I ask Eli. 'Or any crop-sensor DSLR for that matter?'

'I suppose if I want a crop sensor, I'll buy a micro four thirds,' he says. 'They can do just about everything a DSLR does and are more portable. To buy another APS-C DSLR, I suppose I'd want a better frame rate, better focus and some of the newer features like Wi-Fi and built-in GPS.'

And then he gets pensive. 'When you get to my level as a photographer, you just need a bigger sensor... Cartier-Bresson would have shot full frame.'

'But he...' I start to say, and then let the sentence trail off. I don't want to stoop to his level. **AP**

An avid AP reader since birth, **Ogden Chesnutt** lives for photography and the sound of a tripped shutter. In the third issue of each month he shares his photographic experiences and thoughts, as well as his adventures with his camera club friend Eli

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